

# DYNAMIC MYSTERIES



*Practical High-Impact Effects*

**Richard Osterlind**

*Osterlind's  
Dynamic Mysteries*

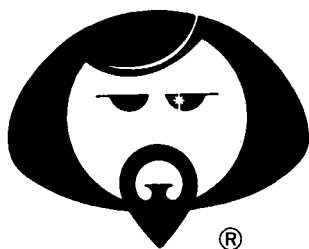


**Richard Osterlind**

# OSTERLIND'S DYNAMIC MYSTERIES

A Collection of  
Practical  
High-Impact Effects

Written by  
Jeff Busby & Richard Osterlind



**Jeff Busby Magic Inc.**

♣ Publishers ♥ Manufacturers ♠ Distributors ♦

*The Finest in Magic Books and Props*

506 Sixth Street

Wallace, Idaho 83873-2249 U.S.A.

Telephone: 208-556-1191

# **COPYRIGHT © 1999 by JEFF BUSBY**

All rights reserved. Reproduction or utilization of this work in any form, by any means now known or hereinafter invented, including, but not limited to, xerography, photocopying and recording, and in any information storage and retrieval system, is forbidden without written permission from the publisher.

Manufacturing and marketing rights are strictly reserved on all items published in this book. Purchasers of this publication are given the right to make up the effects contained herein for personal use only.

**FIRST EDITION  
FIRST PRINTING  
December 1999**

**DESIGN, COVER & TYPOGRAPHY  
Jeff Busby**

**TYPESETTING & ELECTRONIC GRAPHICS  
Vicki Busby**

# CONTENTS

Preface .....	6
---------------	---

## AUDIENCE-TESTED TABLE-HOPPING MAGIC

Freedom Ring .....	10
Osterlind on the Hundred-Dollar Bill Switch .....	14
Economic Expansion .....	15
Two for the Money .....	17
Puff Pasteboard .....	23

## JAW-DROPPING CARD MIRACLES

Test Conditions Card Magic .....	28
Under Test Conditions .....	28
Test Conditions II .....	30
Tribute to Tarbell .....	30
My Father's Favorite .....	33
The Sloppy Jog Shuffle .....	36
Miracle Thought Projection .....	37

## BRAIN-BUSTING CLOSE-UP MENTALISM

Viewed ESP Prediction .....	47
Total Knock Out .....	54
Business Seminar Presentation .....	64
Stage Presentation .....	64

## POWERFUL FEATURE MENTAL ROUTINES

Thanks to Spackman .....	67
Clip Line Deluxe .....	68
Routining a Mental Show .....	74
Air Wave Telepathy .....	76
Supernatural Sight .....	79
Paroptic Psychometry I .....	82
Paroptic Psychometry II .....	85
About Using Jumbo Cards .....	86
Expanding Leipzig's Secret .....	89
About Modern Pre-Show Work .....	92
Test Conditions Design Duplication .....	94
Putting It All Together .....	99

## Preface

Since I began my career as a professional 25 years ago, I've done few lectures for magicians. My first was in 1982 for a local club in Connecticut, where I live, on the subject of mentalism. My next, for which I produced my **ADD RICH'S TO YOUR MAGIC** notes, was during 1984, and presented for the same group. I was privileged to lecture at P. Howard Lyons's exclusive invitation-only Ibidem Events convention twice in the mid-1980s. (That material eventually formed the basis of my **THREE MIRACLE ROUTINES** book.) I did a once-only lecture in 1991, at which point I stopped lecturing.

It's been over a decade since I took to the road for more than a month, driving across America for my first and only lecture tour. My goal wasn't to make a ton of money. The idea was to see the country with my wife Patty and my daughters, Ruth and Rachel, both then preteens. Thankfully, I had unlimited mileage for the rental car!

Knowing I would need lecture notes, I hit the typewriter — no computer back then — writing **RICH WITH A TWIST**. Since I would be demonstrating and teaching the material in-person, I didn't go into much detail in my written explanations — those notes were just 16 pages. I am delighted Jeff Busby took those notes, poked and prodded me for the "real stuff," vastly expanding, rewriting, and updating the material. In addition, he's taken **several** of my unpublished effects and added them to the book: **All the details are here**. I'm very proud of **DYNAMIC MYSTERIES**.

The subtitle is "A Collection of Practical High-Impact Effects." I'd like to emphasize that word "practical." Some magicians make their livelihood from lecturing. They don't go into the real world

and do their magic. Often, the magic they show is designed **just for the lecture**. In contrast, the material in this book represents many years of performances for the paying public.

As Jeff and I worked on this material, I was transported to the past when these routines were developed and tested. Until the very early 1990s, I performed magic table-to-table at the Marriott Hotel in Farmington, Connecticut, during their elaborate brunch. Every Sunday I wasn't on the road, for **seven years**, I performed nonstop from 10:00 in the morning to 3:00 in the afternoon. *Freedom Ring*, *Two for the Money*, and *Puff Pasteboard* are routines I performed hundreds, even thousands, of times at the Farmington Marriott. Each went through uncountable variations until I was happy with the results. You get the final versions here — the way I performed them.

*Under Test Conditions* has taken me all over the globe working at trade shows for Risk and Insurance Management and the Canadian division of the same association. There is hardly a major city in the U.S. and Canada — as well as three appearances in Monte Carlo — where it wasn't a mainstay of my work. It's one I do constantly and I've never had **anyone** figure it out. I recall performing it as the opener of my lecture in Philadelphia. After I did it, several magicians dropped to their knees and bowed low to me! That was a great night with wonderful people. I also did the *Expanding Leipzig's Secret* segment of *Supernatural Sight* for that club. I remember chuckling to myself about the method when it stunned them.

In this book, you'll find more "brain-busters" I **do** in the *Test Conditions Card Magic* chapter. Additionally, I've divulged **all** the components of *Supernatural Sight*, including my design duplication climax. In essence, what you have in the last chapter is a "book within a book" — a complete series of lessons on professional mentalism.

I use *Viewed ESP Prediction* regularly. In fact, I performed it last week during a convention at the Westin Resort at Hilton Head, South Carolina. I always carry an ESP deck that's set for it. It's one of my favorites when I have a "mini-crowd" of about 15 people gathered around a table. It is so easy to do and



destroys the crowd because of the apparent fairness. Jeff's write-up reveals some subtle touches I hate to give away.

Though I've done *Total Knock Out* for more than five years, it's one of my more "recent" favorites. Thinking of how often I've performed this reminds me of uncountable hotel shows everywhere. Today, it's usually the closer for my close-up sessions at business seminars. The response you get when that final prediction is turned up is incredible.

Speaking of closers, I used *Clip Line* as the finale for my first act. Reminiscing on this one takes me to West Virginia and visits with my friend Al Mann. I've just learned Al died as Jeff and I were writing this book. Controversial as Al was, there's no denying he was a brilliant thinker. Al's work on the effect inspired me to create my earliest handlings. *Clip Line Deluxe* — the method you'll read here — is the fifth version I invented. It's the simplest, cleanest, and most powerful — still a closer. When I showed it to Al, he said in his typical way, "Very good, Richard!"

Jeff has a recording of me doing *Air Wave Telepathy* on the radio. I remember the first time I did it, with a frantic drive up Connecticut's Route 91 in a howling snow storm trying to get to the station on schedule! That radio show was a huge success promoting an event I was doing the following week. I hesitated to give away this one, but Jeff offered to pay off my mortgage if I did! Seriously, it is one of the strongest effects you can perform on the air.

I couldn't resist putting *My Father's Favorite* in this book. Not because it's the first trick I learned, and not because I wanted to write about my father. You'll read how I recently used it effectively to cap off my work for a client. This "forgotten miracle" is a stunning impromptu effect with a normal deck of cards. You'll have to pay attention — following that trick are two things I wouldn't have given away without Jeff's persuasion. One is a subtlety I use in my card work; the other is my *Miracle Thought Projection*. Can you imagine the effect of placing a card on the table, asking a spectator to name any card, and having them turn over **that card**? I do it almost daily.

In short, the book you now hold in your hands contains tricks and routines I have made a living with for more than 20 years. There are no pipe dreams — they are **practical** — each has been tested repeatedly “under fire.” I hope you’ll have as much success with them as I have.

*Richard Osterlind*



## Freedom Ring

I've always been a great admirer of Al Koran and the way he performed, mixing magic and mentalism so successfully. One of his most popular effects was the *Flying Ring*, published in his **PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS** — a book full of wonderful material for the worker. The Koran effect, using a *Reel* as motive power to move a borrowed ring into a leather key case, is on the market through myriad dealers today, in many models, under many names, mostly *Ring Flight* and *Ring Flite*.

Regrettably, the standard method for the trick has acquired a "reputation." As Carl Andrews, a professional magician working restaurants in Hawaii, remarked on his recent video, it's so inappropriate for table-to-table work the effect has earned the nickname "**Ring Fright**"! There is plenty that can go wrong with the original method, despite all the precautions you may take to eliminate them: the line on the *Reel* or the mechanism can break unexpectedly, leaving you with the borrowed ring in your hand and nowhere to go; and the clip can fail, sending the ring truly flying!

Realistically, because of the setup, it's completely impractical for the table-to-table worker. I mean, what restaurant magician can take his coat off between tables and reset the line? No, you have another table to please **right away**.

A few dealers and writers have offered versions of Koran's effect without the *Reel*, notably Richard Mark with his *Ring On Ring On*, and Steve Dusheck with his *Ringer*. I bought Dusheck's prop and found it clever enough to try. Unfortunately, after a month of use, it broke. I bought another with the same result. So, I set out to invent a more practical and different method back in the mid-1980s.

What follows is my variation of the *Flying Ring* effect. Here, after the borrowed ring vanishes, it reappears securely trapped on a **completely ungaffed key fob**. It's an effect I used often in my close-up work, particularly when I was doing restaurant magic table-to-table. Since it doesn't use a *Reel*, you don't have to worry about mechanical failure — it's a no risk method.

And, the table-to-table worker will love this facet: It's **always** ready to go, **resets instantly**, and there's nothing hanging out of your pocket. Furthermore, along with the standard effect, my version allows the spectators to handle the fob. It also has added mystery value: the lender of the ring must **unscrew** the fob to remove his jewelry.

## REQUIREMENTS

You will have to shop around for the proper type of key fob. What you need is the type having a spring-loaded screw mechanism that retains the keys on a loop. The correct style has an internal spring that keeps the gap closed even when the threads are completely unscrewed.

Better men's clothing stores offer several styles that will work. Mine is a leather fob made by the Lacoste® company, as shown in Figure One.

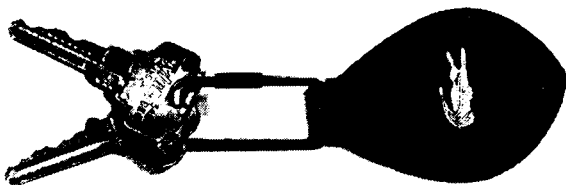


FIGURE ONE

## PREPARATION

To prepare, unscrew the fob and place two keys on the loop. Leave the threaded lock unscrewed, then place the fob in your left jacket pocket. Place a cigarette lighter in your right jacket pocket.

## PERFORMANCE

Borrow a ring from a member of the audience. Ask about the ring's history, doing any of the standard gags. While talking, get the ring into *Finger Palm* position in your right hand. Turn to a spectator at the right as you apparently place the ring into your left hand, secretly retaining it in the right.

Ask the spectator to grasp your left wrist. As if demonstrating what you want done, take hold of your left wrist with your right hand. This gives the proper time misdirection, disconnecting the false transfer from the coming vanish of the ring. It also provides cover for the *Finger Palm*, effectively concealing the ring as you open your right hand **under** your left wrist, then grasp it.

As the spectator reaches for your arm, release the grip of your right hand, again concealing the ring in right *Finger Palm*, allowing your right hand to drop to your side. After relaxing momentarily, ask the spectator if he has a firm grip. Then, go into your right coat pocket with your right hand for the lighter. Leave the ring in the pocket as you bring out the lighter and ignite it.

Wave the lit lighter above your closed left hand a few times, ask the spectator to release his grip, then dramatically open the hand, showing the ring has vanished. Place the lighter on the table.

You explain the flame has caused the ring to become invisible ... then add the ring has flown outside to the parking lot ... into the glove compartment of your car! Tell the lender you will both go and get it, as you reach into **both** coat pockets as though searching for your keys.

Bring out the keys with your left hand, with your left fingers holding the leather fob, displaying the keys by allowing them to dangle as you show them. At the **same time** the right hand retrieves the ring and comes out of the pocket. You do **not** palm the ring, but rather hold it behind your first two fingers with the right thumb.

Keep the keys moving for a few seconds, then transfer them to your right hand. As the hands meet, the right fingers slide

the ring against the screw mechanism and press upward. This opens the gap, causing the ring to pop onto the loop of the fob, all in one move.

Now, release the fob with the left fingers, and hold it by the keys with the right hand. Keep talking, then look down, as if you've suddenly "noticed" the ring hanging from the loop of the fob. No one will notice the loop of the fob is **not** screwed shut. As you show it around, you'll have plenty of time to screw it shut as you handle the loop by the screw lock, turning it over.

End the routine by handing the fob to the lender to verify it's his ring. Ask him to remove it. Because of the fob's spring-loaded design, most people keep unscrewing it long after the threads are free, making the effect appear even more impossible!

Leaving the lock unscrewed, put the lighter and key fob back in the appropriate coat pockets. The **spectator** has reset the key fob so you can do the routine immediately at another table!



# Osterlind on the Hundred-Dollar Bill Switch

**I**t was that genius of subtle magic, Al Baker, who, in the early 1920s, first advanced the idea of using the *Thumb Tip* for a **secret** switch of a billet, or one bill for another. The method perfected by Mike Kozlowski for using the same device to **openly transform** one bill to another was published more than two decades ago in his **HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL SWITCH** book.

Kozlowski fooled just about everyone with his original handling. It rapidly became a modern classic — I doubt there's a close-up magician alive who isn't familiar with Kozlowski's effect. However, if you don't know it, briefly it's this: While you continuously show your hands empty, you fold a borrowed one-dollar bill, change it to a hundred-dollar bill, then back to the borrowed one.

I won't be discussing the mechanics of the transformation here. During the 20 years since Mike Kozlowski published the original, several performers have made their reputations with variations released on tape and in books, notably Michael Ammar, Roger Klauser, and Kevin King. Any of these methods is fine; just give them the practice they deserve.

However, one point to keep in mind is this: Some of the ultra-precise handlings that require both bills be in the open together, masquerading as a single bill, do not work convincingly with foreign banknotes. The inventors of these methods seem to have forgotten that America is one of the few countries where bills are uniform size and color. The visual illusion of these versions depends mainly on this factor. Elsewhere (even in Canada), the different denomination notes are very unlike.

I'm not saying I don't use the *Hundred-Dollar Bill Switch* with bills — I do. Later in this chapter I'll give you the complete details of the routine I used successfully in my restaurant work. However, I think magicians have limited their thinking strictly to transformations of one bill into another. For instance, why not use **size** as well as **category of object** when making the change?

Here's an example: I load my *Thumb Tip* with a Kleenex® tissue. (I pull the tissue apart and use just one-ply.) It gets a huge laugh when I change someone's hundred-dollar bill into a piece of "toilet tissue"! When you hand the spectator the tissue and begin to walk away as though it is the end of the trick, you'll get a bigger laugh still. Then, you reproduce the bill from your wallet, a woman's purse, or anywhere else.

The point is, even a large audience can see a change of this type and it looks quite magical. I worked a party for Chinese New Year. To suit the trick to the occasion, I changed the bill into a large piece of red tissue with Chinese ideographs. With some thought you can come up with many variations to suit what is essentially a close-up trick to larger venues.

## ECONOMIC EXPANSION

Often, that old saw, "Necessity is the mother of invention," holds true. Eight or nine years ago I was hired to produce a promotional video for a major financial services company. Because the director "wrote" the magic he wanted me to perform, I had to invent methods to conform to what he wanted to see me do!

At one point in the video, he decided he wanted me to show a miniature dollar bill, transform it into a jumbo bill, then change it into a standard-sized bill. Since this was crucial to the plot he'd developed, I had to do it!

## REQUIREMENTS

While I wanted to use the Kozlowski switch for the final change, the standard magic dealer's jumbo bill won't fit a *Thumb Tip*. I got blank newspaper for my experiments. If you



go to a local newspaper, you'll find they will give you the end of the rolls they use. You'll have enough of the stuff for life! Failing that, you can buy sheets of unprinted newspaper in an art supply store.

I then cut the newspaper into eight-and-one-half-by-eleven-inch sheets, and used a photocopy machine to make the mini-bill and jumbo of appropriate size. Copied onto this type of paper, the bills look almost real, and because of the thinness of the paper, the jumbo fits in the *Thumb Tip* for the change.

## PREPARATION

First you must make a gimmick for the change of the mini-bill to the jumbo. With both bills face-up, the left edge of the mini-bill is taped with transparent tape to the right edge of the jumbo bill at the lower corner. The jumbo bill is accordion-pleated into thirds across the length, leaving the mini-bill flat. Next, the jumbo bill is folded in half, toward you, making a final packet of the jumbo folded in sixths.

The regular bill is folded and placed into the *Thumb Tip* for the Kozlowski switch. Put the loaded tip and folded mini-jumbo packet in your right side coat pocket.

## PERFORMANCE

Reach into your right coat pocket and get the tip onto your right thumb for the Kozlowski switch. (It's worn throughout the routine and won't get in the way.) Then, pick up the folded jumbo bill so when you come out of the pocket the folded jumbo bill is hidden behind the fingers of the right hand, with the mini-bill projecting from the fingertips, the face of the mini-bill toward the spectators.

Once the mini-bill has been displayed, fold it into thirds, then push it behind the jumbo bill, which you immediately snap open by getting your right fingers into the fold and popping the lower half upward. In a continuing action pull the accordion pleats to the right, expanding the jumbo bill completely. The left thumb goes behind the lower edge of the left side of the bill and holds the folded mini-bill flat, displaying empty hands.

Fold the jumbo bill until it is the proper size for the Kozlowski switch, then continue with the transformation, changing the jumbo into a genuine bill. Your hands are obviously empty at the end of the change.

You will have to experiment with the size of your copies and the folding of the bills to do my routine with a clean change in your hands. It took me just a few minutes to work out the correct size and folds for my set of bills, using the enlargement and reduction capabilities of a good copier.

By the way, with the arrival of digital color copiers, you can make exceptionally convincing-looking bills of **any** size and **color**, making this routine ideal for magicians anywhere in the world. It's a great visual "quickie."

### ***TWE FOR THE MONEY***

As I mentioned in my Preface to this book, I performed table-to-table magic for seven years until 1990 at the Farmington Marriott Hotel, as well as at other hotel and restaurant venues. Though I primarily perform as a mentalist today, working nonstop close-up magic under those conditions taught me many practical lessons about misdirection, interacting with spectators, and honing my routines until they were as effective as possible.

During those many years of table-to-table work, I constructed what I felt was a strong routine for the Kozlowski switch. It proved its worth under the stringent working conditions of restaurant magic — so much so, I used it for more than four years. It has everything necessary for first class magic: Laughs, multiple effects, and powerful mystery.

Those who know the full effect of the *Hundred-Dollar Bill Switch*, and have thought about what they're doing, realize it doesn't make sense to change a borrowed one-dollar bill to a hundred, then **back again**. Sure, the transformation back-and-forth is wonderful, but if you could really change the value of a bill, why not just give the spectator the hundred when you're finished? Why change it back to the measly one? I think the return to the original bill detracts from your reputation and disappoints the spectator who lent the bill.

There's another problem: Some spectators are quite sharp. They notice the serial numbers on the bill they loan you and want to check that the \$100 bill has the same serial number. It may not happen often, but it does happen.

To get around this, some magicians use P. Howard Lyons's *Mis-Made Bill*, making the transformation into an "inversion" effect, then back again. To me, this still has the same hurdle: If you can transform a bill, why not give it to the spectator in the inverted state as a souvenir? After all, it is supposedly the **spectator's bill** and they'd probably prefer having it in that state.

Then, again, there's the obstacle of the serial numbers, especially when they want to handle that "inside out" bill. I do use Howard's *Mis-Made Bill*, but I use it the way Jeff Busby suggested to me: As a climax for my *Inside Out* routine, which you'll find on my **Challenge Magic!** video, where it makes perfect sense.

The routine I developed conquers all those problems. As you'll read, I even present it as the *Hundred-Dollar Bill Switch*, just in case someone has seen another magician do it! Also, the unchanging serial number features in part of the presentation.

## REQUIREMENTS

Instead of using a hundred, or a *Mis-Made Bill*, my routine uses a gag "TWE-dollar bill" available from many magic dealers. The front and back of these bills are styled after a \$20 bill, as shown in Figure Two. Make sure you get decent-looking bills — the quality varies from dealer-to-dealer and there are some awful-looking ones out there. The better ones delay the surprise and make the change far more effective.

As you read my routine, you'll see how using this bill solves the snags I've found with other presentations, and made it into a feature table-to-table routine.

## PREPARATION

To perform you will need one of the "TWE" bills folded for the switch in a *Thumb Tip*. I keep the loaded tip in my outer right coat pocket.



FIGURE TWO

You will also need a *Card in Wallet* in your inner left coat pocket. I should stress you need nothing elaborate here. There's no need for sealed envelopes with stickers and staples in this effect. You just need the wallet, so the effect is repeatable with minimal setup. The better wallets, like the Larry Jennings *Card in Envelope Wallet* have a zippered compartment you can easily load items into.

You can even use an ungimmicked wallet. If you do some experimenting with your regular breast pocket wallet, or check out what's available in men's clothing stores, you'll be surprised at how many off-the-shelf wallets have compartments into which you can load a bill.

## PERFORMANCE

To begin, get the loaded tip on your thumb, then announce you will do your most requested effect. Look at an affluent-appearing spectator and say: "This is the trick where I borrow a twenty-dollar bill from someone, and fold it up. When I open the bill, it has turned into a hundred-dollar bill! Then I give

the hundred back to the person who lent me the bill! So, the trick is not only entertaining, but profitable as well! Do you have a twenty?"

Once you have the borrowed twenty (and it **must** be a twenty) look at it, then call out the serial number. Point at a spectator and say, "You! Remember that number! We'll need it later to verify it's the same bill!" Of course, the spectator can't remember that long string of digits, which will bring a laugh. After the laugh, have half the crowd remember the first four numbers, while the other half remembers the final four.

Then, turn to the first person you addressed, call out the first and last letters, and ask him to remember them. This is much better than having someone copy down the number: It speeds up the pace of the effect, and gets the whole group involved.

After the number is noted by both groups, you continue, saying, "The reason it's so important you remember the serial number is because after the twenty turns into the hundred, it will have the **same** serial number the twenty had! Pretty good, huh? Oh, I know what you're thinking ... you're wondering if that's legal. Well, I checked with the Treasury Department and they said since there won't be a twenty around anymore with that serial number, it's all perfectly legal ... since there is only **one** bill in circulation with that number, everything is fine!"

Now do the Kozlowski switch as you chat away about how happy the lender will be when he gets back a hundred. I use lines like, "I can't wait to see the look of joy on your face when you make eighty dollars profit," or, "After I give this man the hundred, I'll be happy to do the same for **all of you!**"

As you unfold the bill, the smile falls from your face as you realize it didn't work. Show the bill around as you comment, "What a bummer! It's not working ... I had a late night last night and I didn't get much sleep. Do you know what this is?"

Most of your spectators will be laughing by now and someone will respond, "A three-dollar bill," or, "A strange bill!"

Regardless of the answer you look at the lender and say, "No. This is **your** bill. See ... the 'N-T-Y' has dropped off the 'TWENTY' leaving us with a 'TWE' dollar bill!"

This always gets a big laugh as I place the bill on the table. Everyone wants to pick it up and look at it. Do your best during the above actions to keep your tipped thumb behind or beneath the bill.

After everyone has seen the bill and the laughter has died down, pick up the bill, fold it, then place it into your right coat pocket as you say, "Well ... it's been nice meeting all of you. I have to go to another table now!"

Turn to walk away as your right hand is still in your coat pocket. Drop the TWE, then slide off the *Thumb Tip*, retaining the borrowed bill in *Finger Palm*. A quick trial will show you how easy this is.

Your right hand comes out of the pocket as you turn back to the spectators and say "No, I wouldn't do that to you! Let me reimburse you."

Grasp the right lapel of your coat with your right hand, using it to pull your coat open. Begin to reach in with your left hand, then glance inside as if you suddenly realize that your wallet is in the other side of your coat. Release the right lapel, then the left hand takes the left lapel, opens the coat and your right hand reaches in. I handle the load this way so the right hand doesn't come out of the coat pocket and go **directly** to the wallet. By breaking the loading sequence this way, the misdirection works perfectly. If you carry out the actions without hesitation, it looks entirely natural and convinces the spectators your hands are empty.

Load the bill into the wallet and immediately remove it, saying, "Now what did you give me ... a ten?" Most will reply, "No, a twenty!" However, sometimes you'll get the response, "No, it was a hundred!" If you get that answer, point at them, saying in mock surprise, "Don't push it! You don't have **anything** right now!"

Display the wallet, then open it. But, before you reveal the bill, direct attention to an empty compartment, show it's empty, and say "Bad week!" Then open to the place where the borrowed bill is as you say, "Sometimes I keep a buck or two in here ... What's this? ... It looks like a twenty."

Remove the bill, unfold it, and say, "Does the serial number ... " as you read off the number, "sound familiar to you?" The whole group will respond, "Yes!" You reply, "Then I think this is yours." Hand back the bill. As you place the wallet away say tongue-in-cheek, "And, I'll thank you to keep your mitts out of my wallet in the future!"

You can, of course, change any of the patter to fit your personality. I've given you the routine the way I did it — word-for-word — for so many years. If you don't seem to take yourself seriously, the spectators will laugh along with you.



## *Puff Pasteboard*

**I**t was J. Warren Keane, the clever vaudeville performer, who invented the effect of vanishing a lit cigarette barehanded, and the method of the *Cigarette Pull*. As early as 1909, Keane had developed it into the **opener** of his elegant act: The curtains opened on the darkened stage, revealing his wife playing at a grand piano. As Keane entered wearing top hat and tails, puffing a lit cigarette, the spotlight followed him to center stage. Dramatically placing the burning cigarette into his hand, it vanished in a puff of smoke. Keane was secretive about his methods — some remain unrevealed to the present. He was held in such high esteem that in 1936 he was unanimously elected to the elite 12-member "Inner Circle," a group including such luminaries as Max Malini, Nate Leipzig, Al Baker, Cardini, Dai Vernon, Paul Fox, and Charlie Miller.

Keane's opener baffled everyone. But, by 1910, his method had leaked to H.S. Lynn, an employee of the Mysto Magic Company. Lynn went to John Petrie, later of the famous Petrie-Lewis company, but then head of the manufacturing arm of the Mysto operation, and explained how to make it. In a few days Clyde Powers was demonstrating Keane's cherished method behind the counter of the Mysto store in New York City, and had placed ads for the effect in *The Sphinx* magazine! Inevitably, the Mysto pirates were pirated themselves by other dealers in America and Europe — a few months after, dealers around the world started advertising "cigarette vanishers." Keane stopped using it as an opener, integrating his effect into a later segment of his act, for at least another quarter century.

Though Keane's method is sold in every magic and joke store today, the vanish of a lit cigarette is still one of the strongest



effects ever. For table-to-table work, it produces a response way out of proportion to the simple method used. The problem with the straight vanish is this: the spectator usually complains when he doesn't get his cigarette back, even if it was only a two-inch butt! While the solution I conceived does not give the spectator back his cigarette, he is compensated, and quite magically. I contributed this, one of my most successful table-hopping routines, to the March 1986 issue of *Linking Ring* magazine. Though the effect is visually startling, it is little-known, so I thought I'd give it to magicians in a more permanent form with additional details.

## EFFECT

You have a card selected, signed, then returned to the deck. You then have trouble reading the spectator's mind. You ask him or another smoker at the table for a cigarette to help you concentrate.

After lighting the cigarette, you toss the book of matches to the table. The spectators see the cover of the matchbook has the same design as the back of the playing cards you've used. When the spectator opens the matchbook, he finds a picture of his chosen card printed inside the cover!

You place the lit cigarette into your left hand and blow a cloud of smoke at it. The cigarette **instantly and visibly** transforms into the signed, selected card! To finish, you give the card to the spectator to replace his cigarette.

## REQUIREMENTS

You will need a deck of blue-backed Bicycle® cards, a felt marker, and a *Cigarette Pull*.

You will also need some books of matches, like the one shown in Figures Three and Four. From the mid-1980s through the beginning of the 1990s, you could get a box of 50 of these preprinted matchbooks — each with a different card inside — from magic stores for about five dollars. If you were smart, you could get them in grocery stores for a tenth of the dealer's price! At the time, Diamond International Corporation owned both the

Diamond Match Company and the United States Playing Card Company, manufacturer of the well-known Bicycle® brand of cards. They made the match packets to promote both brands. Jeff tells me that USPC used to ship him the matches in huge cartons — he just gave them away, putting them in orders. After Diamond and USPC split, the quality of the cards certainly improved, but the matchbooks vanished from the market.

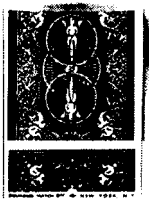


FIGURE THREE

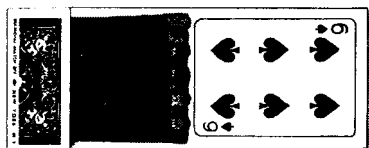


FIGURE FOUR

The dealers may still have some, but with the arrival of easy computer graphics, low-priced color printers, and cheap color copies, you can make them yourself. Just get a carton of book matches without printing on the covers. Now, all you have to do is scan or copy the front and back of a card, shrinking it to size. Then paste the face inside a book of matches, and the back on the blank cover.

All the Diamond-made Bicycle® matchbooks I saw and used had a blue-backed card, that's why I used a blue-backed deck. Now, when you make your own books of matches, you're no longer restricted to blue, or the back design of the Bicycle® brand. You can make them in red, and in any back you prefer.

## PREPARATION

You need to be wearing a *Cigarette Pull*. Some magicians set it so it goes up the sleeve, but I fasten mine at the rear of my pants. I pull the elastic through the belt loops of my pants, so the receiving end of the *Pull* hangs loosely from a belt loop near the front of my body. I position it so it hangs out of sight under my coat, yet where I can easily grasp it. You'll have to experiment to discover what is the proper position for you.

Put the matches in your right coat pocket. Of course, you remember the identity of the card printed inside the matchbook. Put the matching card on top of the deck before you start, or get it there during another card routine.

## PERFORMANCE

It is best if you *Force* the card on the person from whom you later borrow the cigarette, though you can present it to any other person at the table. There will usually be clues to whom smokes — an ashtray, a pack of cigarettes, or most obvious of all, the spectator is smoking! After you've done the *Force*, caution him to keep the face of the card hidden. Have him sign the face. Take it from the spectator, return it to the deck, and control the card to second from the top.

Show the top and bottom cards of the deck asking if either is his card. When he answers "No," place the deck on the table and tell him you will read his mind. Stare at him for a few moments, then say, "I'm not getting anything!" Please ... though the line is always good for a laugh, try to do it without insulting the spectator. Bring him in on the fun instead.

Ask the spectator for a cigarette to "help you concentrate," or turn to a smoker at the table, requesting one for the same reason. Remove the matches from your right coat pocket, but screen the matchbook with your hands as you light the cigarette. Close the matchbook, then flip it onto the table next to the deck. The spectators will notice them immediately and comment.

Pick up the deck as you tell a spectator to open the matchbook. As he's doing this, casually *Double Undercut* the top two cards to the bottom of the deck, moving the chosen card there.

As the spectators react to the printed card and pass the matchbook around, you have plenty of time to *Bottom Palm* the card in your left hand so the card ends up with its face against your palm. The misdirection is strong — the spectators think the trick is over.

Since this is table-to-table magic, you're standing. Place the

deck in the center of the table with the right hand. As you lean forward to place the cards on the table with the right hand, your coat will open slightly and your left hand (with the palmed card) steals the *Cigarette Pull* from under the coat. Don't worry about the palmed card; just take the *Pull* as if the card isn't there. The card may almost fold in half — don't worry about it.

When the spectators' focus returns to you, expecting you to begin a new trick, direct attention to the lighted cigarette. Draw on the cigarette, getting a mouthful of smoke, then place the cigarette into the *Pull* in the left hand. Release the *Pull* in the action of bringing your left hand up to your right hand. Blow out a puff of smoke and produce the card from between the hands **in the smoke**. This looks very magical! Your hands straighten the bend in the card as it is produced.

To finish, give the card to the spectator who lent the cigarette. It seems he is getting his cigarette back, but it has changed to a playing card!

You can't, of course, present it at every table in the smoking section, but it takes only a moment between sections to get the used butt out of the *Pull*, ditch it, get a match packet with another card printed in it, and locate the new card for the *Force*, before you're ready to go. The effect is also perfect for the close-up magician doing bar magic at tables for the patrons.



# Test Conditions

## Card Magic

If you're a diehard cardman, you won't learn any new sleights in this chapter. What you will learn, however, are some twists in handling and presentation that turn some simple ideas into mind-boggling effects.

Shortly after Jeff Busby published my first book, *THE BREAKTHROUGH CARD SYSTEM* in 1983, Ken Krenzel showed me an effect to use with the stack. Ken's ideas are always wonderful and I promptly began using his idea. Since then, the trick has evolved to its present state. I consider it one of the strongest card effects I perform. It's all in the handling of the spectator.

### UNDER TEST CONDITIONS

To begin, you must have a stacked deck. I emphatically advise using my *Breakthrough Card System*, but you could also use the *Nikola System* or any other arrangement or memorized deck where the order appears **entirely random**. You **cannot** use the *Eight Kings* or *Si Stebbins* for this effect: During the action, the spectator looks through the deck and may notice the regular arrangement of the cards.

### PERFORMANCE

Ask the spectator to **think** of any card as you give the deck a convincing *False Shuffle* or two. Cut it legitimately as much as you wish. (As I mentioned in my *BREAKTHROUGH CARD SYSTEM* book, the *False Shuffle* I use is in *THE TARBELL COURSE IN MAGIC: VOLUME ONE* on pages 255-256 under

the name *The Riffle False Shuffle*. I usually do this shuffle a few times on my knee to make it look more casual.)

Hand the spectator the deck and have him fan through it to find his mentally selected card. Instruct the spectator to cut the deck **in front of his card**, which places the selection on the face of the deck.

To add logic to these actions, you comment by handling the cards this way the spectator will prevent you from seeing either the front or back of the selection. If you think there will be any confusion, use the Jokers and extra cards to demonstrate what you want the spectator to do.

Now, walk across the room and **turn your back** as the spectator cuts the deck and looks at his card, "To set the image firmly in your mind," or so you tell him. You then instruct the spectator to slide the selection off the face of the deck, then bury it **anywhere** in the deck.

Walk back to the spectator and hold out your hand for the deck. He will place it on your open hand. Say, "If I were to look through this deck and find your card, would that impress you?" As you ask the **first** part of the question, you point at the deck, then tilt the cards **just enough** to see the bottom card. Since this card was right above his selection, you can immediately compute the card **he** thought of.

Whatever his answer, instantly hand back the deck and say, "Well, let's not even use the deck! Think of your card."

Stare him in the eye, do a mental count of three, then **name his card!**

Watch the expression of shock on his face. There doesn't seem any way you could have learned the card's identity. If the spectator helping you could be an important contact, allow him to keep the cards as a souvenir.

Having performed this effect thousands of times I've found this: If you walk far away from the spectator he lowers his guard ... when you turn around, he may flash the face card of the deck. Should this happen, don't approach him, but finish the effect from **across the room**. When this happens, you have the ultimate **killer** effect!

## TEST CONDITIONS II

Back in 1991, when Ken Krenzel and I were discussing other super-sneaky ways to find a spectator's selected card, I came up with another idea. You can use it several ways to blow away fellow magicians and sharp spectators.

### PERFORMANCE

Again, you'll need a stacked deck for this effect and as usual I use my *Breakthrough Card System*. Do a *False Shuffle*, spread the deck between your hands, then ask a spectator to select a card from the spread. As the card is selected, make it clear you have no opportunity to look at any of the faces.

As he removes the card, give the card in the position **above** where the selection was removed a secret *Corner Crimp*, then close the deck. Have the spectator remember his card, then hand him the deck, asking him to replace his card **anywhere** and **shuffle the deck**.

After the spectator has shuffled to his satisfaction, take back the deck, cut the crimped card to the bottom, then secretly sight the bottom card as you place the deck aside. Because of the stack, you instantly know the identity of the spectator's selection from the card you sighted. Now, either reveal the selection dramatically, or use this information in another routine, as you wish.

While not impromptu, this method will really stump an astute audience!

### TRIBUTE TO TARBELL

My all-time favorite magic book is the first volume of **THE TARBELL COURSE IN MAGIC**. With the profusion of books coming out these days, it may surprise some of my readers I'm not more "progressive." I've read some disparaging remarks on the Internet and elsewhere about how "antique" and "outdated" Tarbell's series is. My guess is magicians making those comments haven't **studied** the gems in the classic books of our art.

The older books are a constant source of inspiration to me. For instance, the first volume of Tarbell's series has a trick by

Joe Berg called the “*Count Down*” *Card Mystery*. Berg’s basic effect is powerful enough for a stage show — I **have** used it that way. I’ve made a few changes in handling and presentation to suit my style, making it sure fire.

## EFFECT

Two spectators assist you. One spectator chooses a card from the deck and replaces it. The cards are mixed. The cards are now fanned with their **backs** toward the second spectator. You ask him to bring his forefinger down on the fan. The card he touches is slowly removed ... it is the first spectator’s selected card! To any audience, this is strong stuff!

## PERFORMANCE

In the original Berg effect, the card was selected by a complicated process of fanning the cards, counting down any number from the top, remembering a card, then dealing the deck into several piles equaling the value of card, then reassembling the deck. Essentially, the trick used a bottom card *Key* to locate the selection. The rest of the procedure seemed designed to nonplus the magician — in those days so interested in complicated location tricks.

Focusing on the most effective part of the trick — the fact that a **second** spectator mysteriously locates the first spectator’s card — you can eliminate the deadwood.

In the simplest form you would know the bottom card of the deck, have a card selected, then returned as you *Hindu Shuffle* the deck, placing the *Key* directly over the selection.

You could also *Force* the card, or have a card freely selected and *Glimpse* the card so you know the identity. (I use Harry Lorayne’s *Super Peek* from his 1979 book **QUANTUM LEAPS** when I do a *Glimpse*.) In either of these cases, you can hand the deck out for shuffling.

However, if you want to make a “brain-buster” out of this effect, use either *Under Test Conditions* or *Test Conditions II* described above, to determine the identity of the first spectator’s selection in the most impossible-looking way. Now, let’s get to the crux of the effect ...



Once you've retrieved the deck after the first spectator's shuffle, fan the deck back-out toward the second person as you point out how you could not possibly know the card. If you notice the selection is somewhere near the center of the fan, fine. If not, close the deck and shuffle or cut, positioning it near the middle, then fan the deck again.

Ask the spectator to raise his right hand high over the fan, then extend his index finger toward you. As he does this, position the fan of cards so the selection is directly in the middle of the spread cards **at the highest point**.

Direct the spectator to **bring his forefinger down slowly to the fan**. As he does this, you ever-so-slightly adjust the fan so his finger lands touching the selection. If he brings his finger down slowly enough, you won't have a problem. With a little practice, this works 100%. Berg's original method was not as certain.

Comment the spectator is touching a card. Upjog it from the fan with his finger still on it, then have him take the card. Ask him to announce the identity of the "card he touched" to the other spectators. Their expressions will be priceless.

Handled correctly, this simple card trick, inspired by Tarbell's description, can make your reputation as a miracle worker.



## My Father's Favorite

**I**t was the **other** Richard Osterlind — my father, Richard Osterlind Sr. — who first interested me in magic. He had no teachers or training and, as far as I know, never read a magic book. My father only did a half-dozen tricks, yet his presentation was so powerful he destroyed people who saw him perform.

Even today I remember a *Retention of Vision Coin Vanish* with a quarter he fooled me with when I was just a five-year-old. He used the reflection of his wedding ring so you could **see** a flash of the coin in his hand when it really wasn't there.

Dad taught me his favorite card trick a few years later — the first trick I learned. I'll always be grateful for the way he encouraged me after that: During the mid-1950s, he often took me to the Klein Memorial Auditorium in nearby Bridgeport, Connecticut, where I saw many top magicians. After he determined my interest was sincere, he began taking me on weekly visits to the local novelty store to buy magic. By the time I was 10, I was doing what most youngsters seriously involved in magic do — working birthday parties.

Now, 45 years beyond learning my first trick, I still do it! Reflecting back, I think my father chose his tricks well. He **never** did the usual card tricks most laymen attempt, like the *21 Card Trick*! I have no idea where he discovered this trick; if someone showed it to him, or he read it somewhere.

It's not a new trick. In fact, it's a very old trick, but there are subtle differences in what you'll read here, from what's been published before. Plus, I'll give you the details on exactly how I get into it, and **another** mind-blowing card effect I always use in my close-up performances.

Tracing it back, the inventor seems to be the wealthy Los Angeles banker, amateur cardman, and magical politician, Caryl

Fleming. It appeared with credit to Fleming as the *Four-Ace Merry Mix Up* in W.F. "Rufus" Steele's 1935 third book, **CARD TRICKS THAT ARE EASY TO LEARN, EASY TO DO ...** A few months later, it was printed without credit in abbreviated form in Glenn Gravatt's 1936 self-published tome, **THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SELF-WORKING CARD TRICKS**. When Gravatt's book was edited by Jean Hugard for formal publication in 1937 as **THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CARD TRICKS**, credit was again missing. Then, it popped up without provenance in books for the public, like Paul Clive's 1946 **CARD TRICKS WITHOUT SKILL** and Wilfrid Jonson's 1952 **CARD TRICKS**, reprinted in the U.S. by Dover. But oddly, for the last four decades, it seems to have gone missing in most popular for-the-public books.

Consequently, though it's old, the method is little-known today, and despite the directness of the method, it completely devastates people. After you read it, you may still disbelieve me. So, rather than taking my word for it, here's what Wilfrid Jonson, an expert British cardman, wrote in his book:

"We can remember, many years ago, seeing a well-known professional magician do this trick to a gathering of experts in the Magic Circle Club Room, and completely deceive all of them. And we can remember, also, their looks of blank astonishment when the simple secret was revealed to them."

What makes this trick so wonderful is how it is presented.

## EFFECT

You put the deck on the table in front of a spectator who is instructed to cut the deck into several piles. Then, you direct him to move cards around haphazardly, sometimes moving cards from one pile to another, other times gathering piles on top of another. The process continues without you once touching the cards.

Finally, when the deck seems thoroughly mixed, you ask if it would be incredible if you could name the top cards of the piles on the table... by this time there are four. You then

request the spectator turn over the top cards. One-by-one, the four Aces appear!

## PREPARATION

The method is simplicity itself — it's all management and presentation. You only need to get the four Aces to the top of the deck.

## PERFORMANCE

My father never did a *False Shuffle* — he had the cards arranged sometime before the performance, then picked up the deck when the circumstances were right and did it. Being more sophisticated — and I'm not sure about that — I do a *Jog Shuffle*, then put the deck down.

When you're ready to start, ask the spectator to cut the deck. You point to one of the halves. Have him cut that pile into two halves again. Point to the other pile and have him cut that into two halves. Let me make this clear: You choose the piles the spectator is to cut, but the spectator does the cutting.

During the action, you sometimes tell the spectator to take the top card of a pile, then put it on another pile, or place one pile on top of another. However, what you are really doing is controlling the actions so those vital Aces end up on top of the **four** final piles. This seems so bold you may think you couldn't possibly get away with it, but the process is convincing.

It fools people because the spectators soon lose track of which pile is which. They think your helper is burying the top cards and thoroughly mixing the deck, but **you** know exactly what you are doing.

For instance, you could have him cut the cards into some piles, then instruct him to take the top card of a pile he just cut off, and put it on another random pile. This does not affect the arrangement — you're conditioning the spectator to follow your instructions. Now, after more cuts and switches, you have him move the top card of the Ace pile to another pile. Later, you will have him cut that pile in halves yet again, now moving the new top card of the lower half to another pile.

What is important is this: Sometimes you may have as many

as seven or eight piles on the table! All you need to do is keep track of where the Aces are throughout the cuts and movements, gradually reducing the number of piles on the table to just four.

It helps the presentation if you assume the attitude you don't care what the spectator does. My father sometimes did this after a few drinks, while partially looking away from the action. I recall him sitting back, a beer in hand, so nonchalantly doing it. The people at the table got the impression he was kidding them. They'd be waiting to see what type of gag ending he was heading for, when the maneuvers were complete. When the helper turned up the Aces, they were stunned!

Though the method is elementary, it needs correct management and presentation to be effective. Play with it for a while, performing it for laymen, **not** magicians or their spouses. You **must** do it for "normal" people to get the hang of how it should go. Once you've perfected your own "randomness" you will catch quite astute people, even magicians, off-guard.

What made me want to print this trick in **DYNAMIC MYSTERIES** is this: Just a few weeks ago I'd finished a show in California. I was jet-lagged ... it was 2:30 in the morning on my East Coast body clock ... all I wanted to do was head to my room and sleep. Then, the host approached me, asking if I would do something for his boss. Worse, he handed me a deck of cards he'd found somewhere. Now, these people had seen my show with the brain-busting effects I normally do with my *Breakthrough Card System* and *Radar Deck*! I had to do something equally top-drawer with no stack or gaff. I went immediately to *My Father's Favorite*. Half-asleep and not seeming to pay attention, I did it for the gathered group. It blew the room away! When it was over, I rose, said "Good night," and walked away, leaving them dumbfounded! It's that good.

### **THE SLOPPY JOG SHUFFLE**

I wasn't going to tip this or the following effect, simply because most magicians are more interested in "how it's done," rather than "how to do it effectively." I don't consider myself a "cardman," but I certainly can do highly technical sleights when

I **need** to. However, in my work, keeping my skill hidden does far more for my reputation than flaunting my ability. The pros and cons can be argued for either side, as they have for so many years. What I'm telling you works for me, producing far more powerful results than if I presented myself as a "card trickster."

I always try to make it seem as if I am **not** a card magician. I've developed my *Jog Shuffle* so the standard "undercut, injog, and shuffle off" is normal, but when I "shuffle off to the break," I hold the cards I've just shuffled into my left hand in a very loose grip. Often a card or two will fall from my left hand, or from the cards still **above the break** in my right, from the sloppy shuffle. I'm safe: the important cards below the break are gripped snugly with my right hand, then dropped as an intact block on top. After I've completed the shuffle, I pick up the dropped card or cards, and calmly shove them into the center of the deck. This adds inestimably to the aura of casualness I try to achieve, and it doesn't interfere with any stack I have at the top of the deck.

I don't **always** drop a card on purpose, but throughout my work the impression left with my spectators is I don't control cards. I used to make a joke of this when working table-to-table at the Marriott, saying, "Jeez, I can't even shuffle a deck without dropping cards!" These days, since I'm not perceived as a magician, I don't bother. As you'll see when you read the description of *Viewed ESP Prediction* in the next chapter, I use this to give the aura of entire randomness during the routine.

### **MIRACLE THOUGHT PROJECTION**

I should stress this: For *My Father's Favorite* to be effective, it must seem entirely off-the-cuff. I emphatically disagree with Gravatt and Hugard's published notion you could use the trick as a follow-up to a previous *Four Ace Trick*. It's crucial the spectators have **no inkling** the four Aces could ever be together, or even that you'll be reducing the legion of piles on the table down to four. So, if you're tempted to set this up easily by doing a *Four Ace Trick*, or something else involving that Four of a Kind, **don't do it**.

I'll describe in the following how I set up the trick, or

another effect where I have to prepare a small stack. But what I'll explain here is infinitely more important than that.

I'm reluctant to let this out. *Miracle Thought Projection* is a method I have held closely for ages. To me, this is a **hundred-thousand-dollar** trick — really — but I'll tell you why later. I'm only explaining it here because most straight-line thinking magicians won't grasp what this is all about. Those of you who learn, apply, and **do** what I'm about to give you will blow minds.

## EFFECT

What if I told you that you could do this: Put a card face-down on the table, then ask a spectator to name a card that comes into his mind. They name it ... you turn it over, **proving you knew the card they thought of!** Then, you do it **again!** For the third time, you put the card down. They name a card. They turn it over. It is the card they named!

I work alone without collusion or stooges. There is no sleight-of-hand. I do **not** switch the card.

Furthermore, this is not a "dream" effect. I do it all the time.

## REQUIREMENTS

None. You need only a deck of cards.

## PREPARATION

There is none ... yet, there is plenty.

## PERFORMANCE

In reality, the mechanics are inconsequential compared with the **real secret**, which I'll discuss in detail after you understand how this works. There's been much written on the so-called *Think-A-Card* trick in the past: reams of paper formulating theory concerning what card a spectator will pick if you ask him or her to just think of one. However, as far as I am aware, until now just two people knew and understood the true underlying secrets I'll reveal here: Jeff and me. That's it. But before I give those away, let me first explain the simplest elements of how I do what I do.

After doing several effects with my *Breakthrough Card System*

or *Radar Deck* (after which I switch-in my stacked *Breakthrough* deck), I offer to attempt a test with a spectator. I go through the deck and place a card face-down on the table. (The card I start this with is usually the Seven of Hearts.) I say to the participant, "O.K. ... there is a card. I'm going to try to send the image to you. It's **not** an Ace or a picture card ... those are too hard to project. Think about it ... then name the card." In my experience, with those words, more than half the time, the spectator will name the Seven of Hearts, or at least come quite close with, say, the Six of Hearts.

Let's say he names the Seven of Hearts. Stop, point at the card, then tell **him** to turn it over. You are done, or you can continue.

If, for instance, they name the Six of Hearts, you say, "You're really doing well ... right suit and just **one** off!" Anything remotely close, the audience will consider a "direct hit." For instance, if the spectator guesses the Seven of Diamonds, you would say, "You're doing very well ... right **color** and right **value**!" If they guess a black Seven, you comment about the match in value, and only the color they received was off. When I'm close, I turn the card over, and continue.

Honestly, this doesn't fail often and the result is utter bewilderment. And, if I miss completely, I have several options. For the moment, to continue the example, let's assume I reveal the identity of the card I've put down, then say, "Let's try it again." This time, for example, I might go with the Three of Spades as my next card. For the third time I might put down a Five of Diamonds. If I were to do it a fourth time, I would then go with a Two of Clubs.

They will almost never go for a Ten-value and a Nine is equally rare. In essence, you only have to deal with the Twos through Eights; you've eliminated the Aces and court cards before you start.

The general rules are these: Raising or lowering the value **they named** by two or three usually gets a match on the next card. If you've placed down a low-value card, jump it up two or three; a high-value card, jump it down two or three; and use the **opposite** color for the next. Sometimes the third card should



be the same suit as your first revealed card, sometimes not: If, for example, you put a Heart down as your first card and the spectator named a Diamond for that card, then I generally place a Heart down again for my third card; if the spectator got the suit right on the first card, but was off in value, then usually my third card is the other suit of the same color.

Though there is a system, it's difficult to explain mechanically — you must be a judge of character. I choose the subsequent cards based on the card I have first put down **and what the spectator names**, continually commenting on how close or far they are from getting the card I was picturing.

I've done this a long time and it is uncanny how often I "hit" for a particular spectator, following their thoughts. When the card is an **exact** match, I look quite serious, pause, then have the **spectator** turn over the card. What a knock out that is!

However, sometimes you don't come remotely close the first time. When that happens, I extend my options in several ways! You'll appreciate this: Suppose I've put down a Seven and the helper says it's a Two. I look at him and say, "Honestly, is that the **first** card you thought of?" Often, the spectator has truly first thought of the card you placed down, changed his mind, and will admit it. I now have another chance, asking him what the **first** card that entered his mind was. Typically, I get a hit then — even more amazing!

However, if that fails, I look around the crowd asking if anyone **else** thought of a card? If someone did, I extend my options once more, asking them what card entered their mind. If it's the card I put down, this shocks the group.

I'll tell you more ways of extending your options in a moment. However, the **real secret** is much more than the simple mechanistic psychological approach I've outlined above. As professional stage hypnotists know, the human mind acts in strange ways. It's rarely discussed, even in the literature on stage hypnosis, but hypnosis as the public thinks it exists, doesn't really. Essentially, the laymen who participate in hypnotic shows are willingly co-opted into a relaxed state where any action they perform "under your power" is acceptable to them. Baldly stated, if they **don't** cooperate, they're off that

stage immediately, and they don't get to be part of the show. In effect, they co-opt **themselves** into belief in your ability. After a performance, if someone were to ask a hypnotic subject if they were aware during the show of what they were doing, they'd say "No," and **believe** it. Simply stated, they **convince themselves** they were hypnotized.

There is another correlation with stage hypnosis germane to this discussion of *Miracle Thought Projection*: For a person to be hypnotized, they **must** first believe you **are** a hypnotist. If you were to go in front of an audience saying, "I haven't done this before ... I just read a book on it ... and ... uh ... I'm going to **try** to hypnotize you," it's highly unlikely you'll be very successful. However, as even beginning stage hypnotists quickly discover, if an audience believes you can hypnotize, you **can**: If you're billed as a hypnotist, introduced as a hypnotist, the audience is expecting a hypnotist, and you act the part of a hypnotist, the battle is over, with surprising results:

Now, how does what I've told you above about stage hypnosis relate to *Miracle Thought Projection*? Stay with me and I'll explain. First, you cannot do this sequence effectively without having "set the scene": The spectator you use **must** believe you are a wonder worker. He or she should be convinced you can read their mind. That's why I **never** use *Miracle Thought Projection* on its own. That's also why I do it at the end of a performing job, after I've accomplished my "brain-busters." By then, anyone who's near me has the impression I truly can read their thoughts. I don't have to convince them ... **they know**.

I regret to say this, but to get the most out of *Miracle Thought Projection*, you'll have to put standard card magic aside. This is **not** a sequence you could use between a *Sandwich Trick* and the *Ambitious Card*. You have to build to it, and you have to prepare the minds of your viewers to accept this as something other than "card tricks."

Correlating this again to stage hypnotism, another part of the real secret is this: You **do not** present this as a battle of wits in which the spectator tries to **beat you**. It begins only as a "test" to check whether the **spectator** can receive thoughts, then builds from there. Be sincere, as if you **want** the spectator

to succeed in receiving the card **you** are thinking of.

You encourage them on the hits, encouraging them all the more, the nearer they are. The better they do, the more the other spectators show their approval. Believe me, unless you've made a terrible mistake choosing your spectator, the helper **wants** to successfully read your thoughts in front of the others! To do this, he'll find if he immediately names the **first card** that comes into his mind — and you're anticipating how he will probably arrive at the next card — he'll be correct.

And, owing to that curious quirk of the human mind, your helper will be as astonished as everyone else! He will **not** understand how he's been subconsciously co-opted into trying to conform his thinking to "hit" the cards you're placing down.

When the spectator names the correct or near-correct cards, the **other** spectators see this as a miracle, but as if the result is **exactly what you intended**.

These then, are the true secrets of why this succeeds: The spectator thinks you can do it, and wants to help you do it. The onlookers have no clue to what the subconscious social and psychological interplay really is. What they perceive is you putting down card-after-card with the spectator receiving your thoughts!

It really kills the crowd, even when I hit after one or two wrong cards. Everyone, including the helper, perceives it as the buildup to the final card, getting closer and closer until he gets your thoughts for an exact match.

But, the extremely rare time everything falls flat, I remark that my attempts at projecting my thoughts to the audience just weren't successful, try as I might! After all, it isn't **my** failure to send, but **their** failure to receive.

What does this have to do with *My Father's Favorite* besides management and presentation? If you haven't figured it out yet, while I'm supposedly looking through the cards for appropriate ones to "project my thoughts," I'm setting the deck however I want! It's nothing to move the Aces to the top as you're rooting through the cards.

And, *Miracle Thought Projection* is a perfect lead-in to the spectator finding the Aces. No matter how it goes, the first

effect enhances the impossibility of the second. Better still, it is the ideal out: Even in the rare event you fail all the way through the first, you're ready to destroy them with the second. Just do my *Sloppy Jog Shuffle* as you comment, "Well, that's not working. Let's test your powers another way."

So you'll better understand our thesis of the correlation between the underlying principles of stage hypnosis and my presentation of *Miracle Thought Projection*, I'll not only give you an illustration from real-life, but also show where an effect as powerful as this can take you.

As Jeff and I are working on this book, I've just returned from a show in Boston. I was hired by a leading international financial services corporation to work an event they were hosting for the prestigious Ryder Cup golf tournament. For the evening, I did close-up on the top floor of a prominent hotel, for a party with 300 attendees.

I performed around the ballroom table-to-table, doing my *Radar Deck*, my *Millennium Center Tear*, metal-bending, working with the *Breakthrough Card System*, and other effects I do repeatedly. I noticed a man who couldn't get enough — he'd followed me to several banquet tables, openly expressing his awe. Near the end of my "time" I still had a huge group around me and this man was among them.

I decided a quick "formal" performance with the group would finish the evening perfectly — it's something I often do before I leave. Standing before the group, I began with some strong mentalism with cards, followed with a rapid prediction of imaginary lottery numbers I often do, then performed *Total Knock Out*, my regular closer, and one I explain in this book.

The group wanted more, so I worked *Under Test Conditions* from across the room, which I explained in the previous chapter of this book. They were flabbergasted, setting the scene ideally for *Miracle Thought Projection*, and I knew that **believer** in the crowd was my subject.

I invited him to participate and put down the Seven of Hearts. After telling him what I wanted him to do, he named the Six of Diamonds. After turning up the card and commenting on how close he was, "Off just one both ways," I put down

the Three of Spades as I said, "Let's try it again." He named the Two of Clubs. Again, I turned up the card myself as I remarked how close he was. Even with those two near misses, excitement was building.

By now, I was very sure where he "was going," so I put down the Five of Hearts, saying, "One more time." He paused, truly trying to receive my "thought waves" successfully, then said, "Five of Hearts." I focused attention of the group on the card then said, "Turn it over," gesturing toward the face-down card. When he did, the room became very, very hushed.

This man was stunned, as was the audience at this ending. I could see the utterly blank, bewildered look in his eyes. Now, no one was aware I do a complete hypnosis show. Remember, I was hired to do close-up. Though I was set for it, I dispensed with *My Father's Favorite* as a follow up. This man had convinced himself I could do anything ... the ideal hypnotic subject.

As I approached the man, the group opened a path ahead of me. I instructed him to put his hands together for the classic hypnotic *Hand Clasp Test*. When I told him to pull his hands apart, he couldn't. His knuckles whitened as he struggled! By now, the crowd was whispering among themselves.

Instantly, I put my hands on his temples and commanded him to sleep! He slumped upright with his eyes closed. I continued the hypnotic induction, instructing him to wake when I told him, then he'd be able to release his hands. Following through, I did that. For the next few minutes, I alternately commanded him to sleep and wake, making him forget his name, then giving him a new one, and doing other tests I normally do in my full hypnotic show, until I woke him fully. I was finished!

The buzz from the crowd was intense. Then came that stream of requests: "Do you have a card?" I keep a quarter-inch stack — approximately 35 — of my business cards with my agent's contact information on them, in the outer breast pocket of my coat. That night, I refilled my pocket with business cards at least **three times**.

Just an aside, but here's a valuable tip: I don't use a business card case — I don't like to fumble — that's why I have the cards in my breast coat pocket with the printing facing my body.

I just reach in my pocket with finger and thumb, separate a card and come out immediately with the card, printing up. Normally, I ask for their card in return. Those go into another pocket. When I return from a booking, I pop that stack of cards off to my agent. Right away, he sends my promo package to those people.

Sure, I don't get an immediate booking for every business card I hand out, nor each I take, but over the years I've found I get three to five **new clients** for every 100 cards I pass out when they're requested. And, it's worth mentioning the Ryder Cup show in Boston and **two others** came from my doing *Miracle Thought Projection* at **another** venue.

I hope you'll forgive me for saying this — I don't want to seem gauche — but my fee for **one-hour** of close-up (and I'm always booked for a minimum of three hours) is **ten times** what the typical close-up worker is paid for a **whole night** of work. Since I passed out more than 100 cards after the Boston show, I will get three to five more shows as a result. In plain language, the value of this single performance of *Miracle Thought Projection*, translated into the dollars and cents of future business, is between \$12,000 and \$20,000. So, when I say what I've explained is worth hundreds of thousands of dollars to me, I kid you not.

How did the Boston client react to what I did? First, I must tell you I don't use the tactic of inviting my clients to write letters of recommendation, as some books on publicity and promotion propose. I feel putting the client in that position produces an awkward and insincere letter. If they like me, they **will** write my agent. My agent receives many letters, but more important, rebookings by the same clients. The letter about this show from the executive who'd booked me, enthused over the sensation I'd caused: "His talent is nothing short of remarkable. Our guests were mesmerized and thunderstruck by Richard's incredible mental feats." The letter continued, praising what I'd done close-up as "astonishing," then singled out my card work as "amazing." It closed saying, "It was an evening sure to be remembered by all. Please convey our awe and sincere thanks to Richard." The executive not only signed off on

this, but copied the letter to two other executives in the corporation.

And, yes, I'll be working for them again.

What you've just learned is part of my permanent professional repertoire — something I've made my reputation with for several years. Learn it, practice it, and you'll destroy anyone who watches you work with nothing more than words and a shuffled deck of cards.



## *Viewed ESP Prediction*

**A**s I mention in my Preface, I use this routine regularly and always carry a deck of ESP cards with me for it. While I present *Viewed ESP Prediction* close-up, I see no reason you couldn't perform it on stage with jumbo ESP cards and a stand.

This routine was initially inspired by a Bob Mason idea in which the mentalist predicted five cards a spectator would choose from the tops of **two** decks of ESP cards. In the mid-1970s, Sam Dalal published a similar trick with one deck in his **MAGIC WITH AN ESP DECK**, called *Forced Freedom*.

My contribution is twofold: Streamlining the method with a single deck, making it far more natural and convincing, and presenting it so the audience **sees** your prediction gradually coming true as the test proceeds! Don't underestimate the importance of this latter aspect of the routine — it is the reason it plays so **strong**.

When I performed this at the Psychic Entertainers Association's convention a decade ago, Larry Becker was in the audience. Afterward, Larry told me he felt a strong sense of excitement as he watched the prediction gradually fulfilled right in front of his eyes!

### **EFFECT**

After shuffling an ESP deck, then asking someone to help you, you draw a prediction on a large pad of paper, and hand it to a person at one side of the onlookers. The prediction is **not**



hidden in any way: **All** the spectators on that side are allowed to view the pattern of five ESP symbols you've drawn.

Inviting your helper to take the ESP deck, you ask him to deal cards from the top, stopping when he wishes. Then, he discards the remainder of the deck, and divides the dealt pile into two piles. You ask him to touch the top card of **either pile** — he has a free choice — then turn it up, placing it where you point on the table top. He does this again, once more with an absolutely free choice, as you indicate where he's to place the selected card.

As he continues, the spectators looking at the prediction **see** a pattern developing, **exactly** matching what you've drawn. This goes on until there's just one more card for the spectator to select. Again, you emphasize the free choice of top cards, allowing the spectator to change his mind between the packets as much as he likes.

He turns up his card ... it fulfills your prediction **exactly**! The side holding the prediction is staggered watching it happen. When your prediction is shown to the helper and the remainder of the group, they'll be astounded!

## REQUIREMENTS

You will need a standard 25-card ESP deck composed of five circles, crosses, wavy lines, squares, and stars. You'll also need a large pad of paper and a marking pen. Nothing is gimmicked.

## PREPARATION

Take five of the ESP cards in any order — I feel two of the symbol cards in the set should match, to give the look of "complete randomness" with the prediction.

Remove another five cards matching your first set, but arrange these in **reverse** order. Place the second set beneath the first, then put the combined packet on top of the remainder of the ESP deck. So you can follow along as I explain this, we will use the 10 cards for our demonstration, arranged as shown in Figure Five.

Case the ESP deck. That is the entire preparation.

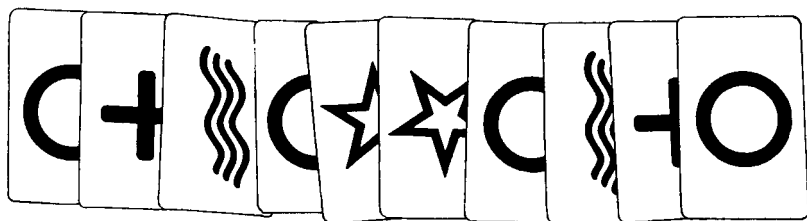


FIGURE FIVE

## PERFORMANCE

If you're interested in seeing how I present this live, and how it affects an audience, I included it on my ***Challenge Magic!*** video. There are several points in this explanation that weren't tipped on the tape or the version previously printed in my ***RICH WITH A TWIST*** lecture notes. I'll include them here.

To begin, uncase the ESP deck. Display it face-up, pointing out the five different symbols, as you explain their use in testing Extra Sensory Perception and telepathy. Give the deck a *False Shuffle* or two. If you have the ***Challenge Magic!*** video, you may have noticed I dropped a card during the shuffle at the beginning of *Viewed ESP Prediction*. I then picked it up, placed it in the center of the deck, and continued. This was no accident! That's my *Sloppy Jog Shuffle* in action, which I explained in the previous chapter. If it flew by you when you watched my taped presentation, that's what it's supposed to do! It doesn't affect the 10-card stack at the top of the deck, and looks quite disarming.

Once you've shuffled, run the deck quickly from hand-to-hand looking at the faces of the cards as you announce you will make a prediction. Place the deck face-down in front of a spectator. Pick up the pad and explain you will "draw" your prediction so there will be no doubt about what your forecast is. As your prediction, you simply draw the arrangement of the top five cards of the deck, as shown in Figure Six. These are from the example in Figure Five. The numbers indicating the positions are **not** written on the pad; they are there for your reference in understanding the explanation.

After you complete the drawing, you "decide" to allow a member of the audience hold the prediction, so several spectators can **look at it** as the test occurs. Caution the person who will assist you that he is not to see the prediction.

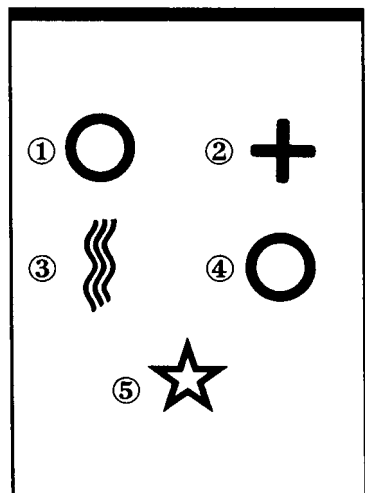


FIGURE SIX

An important presentational point I've developed during the past few years is this: I usually hand the prediction to a person sitting at **my right**, asking him to show it to the spectators on his side, while the people to my left do not get to see it. I've found the crowd may grow as I perform this routine. It's very effective for half the group to watch the **other** half reacting to the prediction, all the time wondering what the other spectators are seeing.

Tell the helper to pick up the face-down deck and deal cards from the top one-by-one onto the

table in a single face-down pile. After he has begun the deal, casually say "Deal about half the deck." You want to get at least the top 10 cards onto the table in the pile. Once the 10 cards are down, tell him he may stop dealing whenever he wishes. When he stops, take the undealt cards from him, turn them face-up showing they are well mixed, as you point out he could have stopped anywhere. Place them aside, out of the way.

Ask the assisting spectator to pick up the pile of dealt cards. Instruct him to deal them back onto the table into two face-down piles, dealing alternately between piles, one card at a time. As he deals the final card, **remember the pile on which this last card is placed.**

You now tell the spectator he will go through the following procedure: He will touch the top card of **either pile**, turn the card face-up, then put it on the table. You add he will do this five times, choosing each card from whatever pile he prefers:

He may select all from one pile, or pick some from one and some from the other, as he wishes.

Because of the mirrored arrangement of the cards, and the way he dealt the cards, he **must** take the five cards you predicted. However, the problem you must now overcome is this: You want him to lay out the cards on the table in **exactly the order** you predicted, giving the illusion that you not only predicted the cards he would choose, but also the order in which he would choose them!

To do this, as the person touches one pile or the other, **you** point to the spot on the table where you want him to put the card, then have him turn it face-up. Since you supposedly don't know the identities of the cards, this procedure goes unquestioned.

Here is how you know where to indicate the card will be placed: Recalling the pile on which the final card was placed, you would consider this pile the "odd" pile, and the other pile the "even" pile. The odd pile has, from top down, the ESP cards in the order 1-3-5-4-2 related to your pictorial prediction. The other pile, the even pile, has the cards running in the order 2-4-5-3-1 from top down. Thus, the odd pile has the cards in order of the prediction running counterclockwise, while the even has them clockwise.

Ask the helper to drop his finger on either pile, emphasizing he has a free choice. Let's say he touches the odd pile first. Have him take the top card face-down. Making a mental image of the 1 through 5 positions on the table in front of the two piles, you point to where the 1 would be, ask him to put his first card there, and turn it face-up.

Now let's suppose for the second selection he goes to the even pile. You know that's the beginning card of the clockwise running order. You point to indicate that card goes at position 2 and is turned up there. (If he stays with the odd pile for his next choice, then you know it's the second card in the counterclockwise running order. You would then point to position 3 on the table, indicating he should put it there and turn it face-up.)

If he stays with the even pile for his third choice, you would

indicate position 4 as the place for him to put it, following the clockwise order around.

If he stays with the even pile for his fourth choice, you point to position 5, again moving around the arrangement clockwise for the even pile, and counterclockwise when he selects the odd. In reality, there's very little to remember.

For the fifth and final choice, there's a beautiful touch: The top card of either face-down pile is **the same** after four selections are made! It doesn't matter which he chooses ... you can build this up impressively. Point to the final open position, allow him to make his choice, then tell him he can change his mind if he likes before the card is turned face-up. Ask him if he's **sure**, to pound this home. This is compelling — it leaves the impression you pointed at each spot **before** the spectator made his selection!

Once the helper has made his concluding decision, have him take the top card of the pile he chose, then put it face-up in the open position. As the right side of the audience reacts to your prediction coming true, you pick up the **other** pile. Do a *Strike Second*, turning the top card face-up as you say, "If you had taken **this** card it would have been entirely different!" (The misdirection is heavy. Even if you do a poor *Second Deal* you'll get away with it. You can, of course, choose not to do the *Second Deal*, but the pounding home of the randomness is worth it.)

Drop the card face-down on top of the pile, then turn that pile face-up on the table. Pick up the other pile turning it face-up, and drop it on top of the tabled face-up pile, merging them. Spread them across the table driving home the point the cards are in completely haphazard order, as you mention he could have "selected any of these cards."

Ask the person holding the prediction to hand it to you. Place it prediction-side-up next to the five-card layout, letting your helper and the other half of the audience see the results. The response is one of utter disbelief.

I realize some readers may have difficulty following an effect of this kind in print or in their heads. To understand it, stack the cards **face-up** and go through the routine. The reason

the method works will then become obvious.

*Viewed ESP Prediction* is a wonderful effect, way out of proportion to the easy method.



# Total Knock Out

While I prefer to perform material I've invented, I have no objection to using a marketed trick or effect if it suits my style and I can give it the "Osterlind Twist" in presentation or method. But there is so much utter junk available, it's often difficult to differentiate between the workable and the useless.

This hit home a few years ago when I stopped into a magic shop on the way back from a show ... Yes, I do that if the mood strikes me! It was July, so the dealer had just returned from the IBM convention. He had a ton of new stuff on his shelves. I spent an hour looking at all those "original effects" and gimcracks and didn't buy a thing. There's plenty of magic "out there," but little of it's of any worth. I formerly believed magicians were merely cheap, but over time I've changed my opinion to this: Perhaps they're innately sensible. After all, why would anyone want to spend even a dime on something they can't use?

I'm not writing this to flatter my friend and publisher Jeff — I've gone on record about this before — but during the almost two decades I've known him, I don't think I've ever gotten anything from him I didn't use. Not one thing. If it's trash, he says so ... in print and very bluntly. I value his judgment whether a trick I'm interested in is for me. So, when I received John Cornelius's *Total Recall* from Jeff in 1994, I was pleased: Gimmicked calculators are common, but this one was something special — the best ever. I immediately saw tremendous potential for an impressive close-up routine.

Having a trade show booked for the following week, I worked on several routines to determine how each would play, finally

settling on an extension of a routine John had in his instructions. By the close of that convention I had performed the routine countless times, perfecting the twists and nuances necessary for a successful professional presentation. The result was an impossible-seeming routine that fooled **everyone**, and worked under fire. Shortly after, I wrote it up for Jeff. He distributed it to a limited number of his customers as an exclusive manuscript — part of his “after service.”

Now, during the almost-six-year interval, I’ve changed and strengthened the routine so it plays even better. What I’ll describe is tested in hundreds of performances. It never fails to blow spectators away — including well-informed magicians and mentalists!

## EFFECT

You introduce a small pocket calculator, then borrow an onlooker’s business card. The calculator is handed to a spectator. You request he just think of a two-digit number with some personal meaning, then punch it into the calculator, hiding it so you have no inkling of his number. You then ask him to multiply this number by another two-digit number, also with meaning, remember the product, then clear the calculator.

The calculator is handed to a second spectator, with the request he go through the same actions as the first helper. But as he **begins** to punch in his first number, you suddenly inform the crowd you’re “catching a thought.” With that, you quickly jot something on a pad, then put the pad aside. The second spectator completes the multiplication process, memorizes the result, clears the calculator, then turns it off.

Reminding the audience you borrowed a business card, you write something on the rear. You hand it writing-surface-down to a third onlooker, explaining you’ll return to it shortly.

You now ask both spectators to concentrate on their totals, as you pick up the pad and pen. You get a digit, then another, then more, going back-and-forth between the spectators, at one point **proving** you wrote the numbers down **before** they thought of them ... reading their minds as you jot the numbers on the



pad ... until you've divined the **exact** numbers and the **sequence** of those numbers!

Showing the totals you've written on the pad, you tear off the sheet, placing it aside. You demonstrate the normality of the calculator, proving by longhand how the helpers arrived at their results. To cap the routine, you pick up the pad, displaying the two numbers. You total the two results as you stress the completely random manner in which the helpers created those numbers. Reminding the group you began by borrowing a business card that's been in the possession of another onlooker, you put the pad on the table. You ask the spectator to turn the card over ... showing you predicted that total!

Trust me ... this is a killer! When I first did it in my trade show, it was the most talked about effect I did the entire week. It's so strong it's been a fixture of my close-up and trade show work for the past five years.

Since much of my work is for business seminars, I'll also disclose the presentation I've developed specifically for that very profitable field for performers. I've also successfully done *Total Knock Out* on stage. To be thorough, I'll explain the presentations I've used for that particular venue.

However, so you understand everything, concentrate on learning the first routine I'll describe, so you're familiar with the handling before moving on to the other presentations.

## REQUIREMENTS

To do this effectively, it's best if you have the *Total Recall* apparatus and a working knowledge of the gimmick and the basic moves. It's the prop I use; to my mind, it's the finest of the gimmicked calculators. However, there are others available that, slightly adapted, may work equally well with my routine. I'll cover those options too, and make some comments about alternative calculators.

The concept of using the memory capabilities of a calculator to retain a number initially appeared in the early 1970s. Since then, there have been so many variants I've lost track of them. Many of the earliest worked by swapping the "equals" button for the "memory" button.

John Cornelius's *Total Recall* works essentially the same way: In his version, the "add into memory" (M+) button is switched with the "equals" (=) button. Thus, after the calculator is turned on, and a spectator multiplies a two-digit number by another two-digit number, when he hits the equals button, the product is really stored in the memory. A push of the "clear" button appears to clear the calculator, but the entered total is retained in memory when the calculator is turned off. The calculator also performs a cumulative total of the same set of operations done by a second spectator, adding them to the first set. The clever idea behind John's gaffed calculator is this: It has two pressure points in the flapped case. When you push on the pressure points, they push the necessary buttons on the calculator. By pressing on these points in sequence as you handle the closed case, they turn on the calculator, then bring back the final total to the display. When you open the case, you can glimpse it secretly.

John's gaff is a great idea. However, there are two options you can explore if *Total Recall* is off the market, or you'd prefer to use another device. Other calculators store operations in memory after they are turned off. You'll have to search for an adaptable calculator that won't look suspicious when altered.

The primary attribute you need to look for is this: There should be no indication on the display that anything is retained in memory. Some calculators show a large "M" or other symbol to the left of the display when memory is functioning. Others don't.

Additionally, the memory function keys must be the identical size as the operation keys. Also, the operation keys should be next to, or quite near the memory function keys: Remember, the "X" key must actually work; you can't have the "=" oddly stuck in the row of memory function keys; and the location of the "M+" key shouldn't seem out of place where you put it.

Once you locate a calculator that is suitable, all you have to do is open the case and switch the two buttons — the buttons aren't glued in, they usually fit loosely in grooves. Even without the special cover, you can still do the routine: Just hold the calculator face-down and hit the buttons while talking.

If you can't find a calculator that stores results in memory **after turning it off**, you work it this way: Don't have the spectator turn the unit off after multiplying. Just ask him to clear it. You hit the memory recall ("MR") button as you talk. In the course of handing it to the second person, you sight the number, then hit clear. It takes only a second. After the second person multiplies his numbers, then clears the unit, you take it back. Get the number by hitting the "MR" button while shutting off the calculator.

Frankly, I've practiced covering the button-pushing and know it works. Occasionally the Cornelius prop doesn't function as it should ... I'll press the points on the case, open it and ... **nothing**! When this happens, all I do is casually punch the required buttons while chatting about making sure the calculator is cleared. Despite that flaw, I believe the calculator John made his *Total Recall* from is the top ready-made unit on the market. Getting it will certainly save you time.

You only need the calculator, a small pad of paper, and a pen to work my routine. Nothing else. I use a three-inch-by-three-inch pad, the one with which I do my *Surrounded Slow-Motion Center Tear*, *Millennium Tear*, and many other effects. I always have this pad with me.

## PERFORMANCE

Begin by bringing out the calculator, pad of paper, and a pen. Ask for the loan of an onlooker's business card. If no one has one, use your own. Place the card beneath the flap of the inside cover of the calculator, then turn on the unit by openly pressing the red "clear" button, which is also the "on" button for the *Total Recall* unit.

Hand the calculator to a spectator and ask him to punch in a two-digit number. Before he begins, suggest this number should mean something to him. Continue, saying, "Perhaps it could be part of your telephone number or a few digits of your Social Security Number."

Next, instruct him to hit the multiply sign, then enter another two-digit number important to him. You then instruct

him to hit the equals sign and remember the total. Now, ask him if he needs to write it down, or if he feels he can memorize the total. If he wants to record it, tear off a sheet from the pad, **turning away** so you won't be accused of peeking.

Finally, instruct the helper to hit the red "clear" button, then turn the unit off. (The total of his calculation is now stored secretly in the memory.) Have the spectator close the flapped case and take back the calculator.

Now say, "You may be wondering why I go through all this trouble just to get a number. That's because when I ask someone to think of a number, then I get it, everyone always says, 'It's psychological!' They **always** say that ... even if it's the most obscure number in the world! Now the number you just got ... that's a **random** number ... you probably didn't even know exactly what the result would be until you hit that 'equals' button."

Turn to a second onlooker. As you're explaining he will go through the same actions as the first spectator, you press on the two points of the case that turn on the calculator. This recalls the stored information to the display. It's easy: You have only one business card under the flap; the actions are perfectly natural. You open the flapped case so only you can see inside ... there's the first spectator's total on the display. Remember it! Then push the red "clear" button as you apparently turn on the unit, actually clearing the total again. It looks exactly as when you originally turned on the calculator, but the first spectator's total is gone, hidden in memory. Just be sure you are the only one who can see the display when you open the case.

Hand the calculator to the second spectator, repeating the instructions about the two-digit numbers you gave the first spectator. As the second spectator **begins** punching in his numbers, you appear to suddenly catch a thought. Pick up the pad, rapidly jotting the first spectator's number in large numerals slightly above the center of the pad. Don't let anyone see what you are writing.

There are two reasons you do this: It's easy to forget the number if you don't record it quickly! Under the duress of giving a powerful presentation, particularly if you are doing this

routine repeatedly, you can forget the number. Take my advice, and avoid disaster. **Write the number down.** The second reason I'll get to later, when you'll learn how to turn this memory aid into a wonderful piece of business that strengthens the impression you **really** can read minds.

This segment of the routine can be amusing if you appear to get an urgent thought from nowhere ... an impression you **must** write down. Don't explain or show what you are writing. Present it as if this sort of thing occurs to you routinely ... you will explain later. Put the pad face-down on the table, or in your pocket if you are standing.

After the second spectator has cleared the calculator and turned it off, take it back in closed position. Remind the audience you borrowed a business card. Tell them you'll write something on the card before you go further.

As you are talking, again press on the two points of the case, which turns the unit on and brings the **total** of both spectators' numbers onto the display. Open the calculator, spot the total, then hit the "off" button as you remove the business card. Though these actions seem like many, if you have *Total Recall* you'll discover the moves happen so rapidly you'll be able to see the number as you lift the flap, hit the "off" button instantly with your left thumb, then remove the card swiftly and naturally. Just give the series of moves some practice so you don't fumble.

Immediately write the total on the rear of the card without showing it to anyone. Place it writing-side down on a third spectator's hand, asking him to guard the card, and cautioning him **not** to look at it or show it to anyone. Explain you will get back to the card shortly.

You say, "O.K., we now have two people, each of whom has a number. Bob over there doesn't know Jim's number, and Jim doesn't know Bob's. Both of you concentrate on your final number." Pick up the pen and pad and lightly jot the final total — the one you've just written on the business card — above the first spectator's number. Make this notation **as light and as small as possible**. As you write this number, you "mentally receive" the first digit of the first spectator's total, revealing it

While asking the helpers to concentrate again and transmit their thoughts, subtract the first spectator's number from the lightly written total to get the second spectator's number. As you do the calculation, write the second spectator's result on the pad in numerals the same size of your original notation, making it seem as if you're noting additional thoughts. Also, as you do this calculation, "receive" the **second** digit of the first spectator's total, then suddenly "get" the **first** digit of the second spectator's number.

Now comes an impressive bit of business! While ingenious methods are valuable, mentalism is primarily **presentation**. Here's a "side effect" I do during the routine to heighten the impression I actually do read minds. For sake of explanation, we'll assume the second spectator's total is 1014. You've just revealed the first two digits of the first spectator's total. You begin to reveal the second spectator's total by making your revelation of the first digit correctly, the "one." However, you now stop cold, and say, "Earlier, while you were still **deciding** on your numbers, I had the strong impulse to write down a zero and a one." Tap the pad, but don't let them view the figures yet. Ask the second spectator if the **next two numbers** in his total are "zero and one." He'll be flabbergasted you're right. The perception of what you've done is this: When you suddenly "caught that thought," picked up the pad, then jotted the number on the pad, **as he was still punching in numbers**, you wrote **his number** on the pad! Yes, it's the old *One-Ahead*, but you don't do it with anything more than the audience's minds!

Pick up the pace now by rapidly going to-and-fro between the spectators until you've "received" all the digits in each of their totals.

Since it seems impossible you could possibly know **either** of the numbers, the effect is phenomenal. At one point, as you're "getting the thoughts," appear to make a mistake, crossing it out. However, what you really mark over is **the total** you wrote in small light numbers. You're now rid of the evidence of the calculation you used to derive the second spectator's number. This leaves you with only the two spectators' original totals on the pad.

Show the pad, displaying the fact that you've written the spectators' two numbers! Tear off the top sheet. The effect seems over. **It's not!**

Still holding the pad and pen, you ask the first spectator if he remembers his **original** pair of two-digit numbers. Sometimes, because of the nature of the totals you are working with, you can make educated guesses what the two numbers the spectator originally chose could be. For instance, when I did this routine a week ago, my guesses were correct about a half-dozen times, and shattered the spectators. It's difficult to explain precisely how to do this, but if you've strongly suggested the spectators use numbers that are their age, or part of their birthday, you can take a shot at guessing a digit or two!

When he tells you, openly jot down the two sets of numbers, then multiply them out longhand on the pad, saying, "Just like we all used to do in grammar school!" Do the same for the second helper.

Here, I do a "nervy" bit. The faint of heart among my readers may disbelieve me, but I assure you this is exactly what I do: I talk about the manner in which the two numbers were formed and how I could not possibly know any of the personal factors involved in their formulation. After that, I explain I want to show them these are the **genuine** products for the numbers they chose — the results are the identical numbers I "received" mentally. I then add, "I wanted you to know I don't have some kind of **sneaky calculator that spits out my numbers!**" Now, I can guess what you're thinking as you read this, but believe me, it plays beautifully. It also deflects "heat" from the calculator perfectly: If there are "smart ones" in the crowd, this destroys what they may be thinking. You're canceling any avenue to the method by hinting at a possible solution, then proving it wrong.

Besides eliminating suspicion of the calculator, there is another major reason for this: You are going to stun them with a kicker that leaves them speechless! You now say, "Do you feel I influenced you in any way when you chose your numbers?" They'll have to say, "No."

Pick up the pad and display the numbers. Now say, "I can make one more random number. I can add both of your final numbers together." Openly add the two numbers as you reinforce the arbitrary way these numbers were derived. When you have the sum of the two numbers written on the pad, you continue: "O.K., the total of both of your numbers is 2796. Remember ... I just showed you your numbers are the real numbers based on the original numbers you chose. Any change in your 32, or your 56, or your 78, or your 13 would have **changed** that final number!" Remind the group you began by borrowing a business card. Emphasize it was held in full view by a spectator, face-down, "all this time." Put the face-up pad on the table as you say, "**Before I did anything** I wrote something on the back of that business card." Direct attention to the person holding the business card as you say, "Would you turn it over?" By now, several spectators may suspect what's coming. It doesn't matter. When the card is turned over, they see you predicted the total **in advance!** The suspense whether you'll be correct, followed by the confirmation you **are** right, is an awesome ending.

By the time you get to the concluding revelation, the audience members will have forgotten precisely when you made your prediction on the business card. The interval between your revelation of the numbers, the business of proving their numbers are the true products of the calculations, combined with the fact you borrowed the business card at the beginning of the routine, puts such a time lapse between writing on the card and the last revelation, nothing is ever questioned.

The climax is so effective thanks to this: Though you initially seem to use telepathy to "receive" their numbers, there is no explanation how you could have predicted the total before you began. Viewers reflecting back on the routine will be even more baffled!

Since this is the last routine I usually do in a show, I finish it by looking around the crowd, then exclaiming, "What a headache I have!" That gets a big laugh. I thank them and take my leave.



## **BUSINESS SEMINAR PRESENTATION**

Today, much of my professional work is for business seminars and corporate conferences. I use this presentation for those groups and industry-specific trade shows. It has built-in humor these types of audiences can relate to, because it involves concepts and terms they normally use in their daily work.

The handling is identical except I involve the **whole group** in the effect. I tell them I will divide the onlookers into two product teams: Team A and Team B. Then, I split the crowd in the middle.

I have everyone on Team A look on as one of them punches in the numbers they chose to produce the product of the multiplication. As in the previous presentation, I mention the team probably didn't even know what the "product would be" until the equals button was pushed.

I then do the same for Team B. I hand the business card to one member of either group, asking him to act as "the manager." After asking both teams to concentrate, I divulge the numbers in the back-and-forth manner I described previously. I direct attention to the pad and ask the members of Team A if they remember their original two numbers. When they tell me, I write them down, then multiply them out in longhand as described previously. I do the same for Team B. After that's done, I explain I wanted to show them these are the "real deal" products for the numbers they chose.

Throughout the remainder of the presentation, I continually stress I am using the "real deal" numbers **they decided on** ... if they'd changed just one of those "real deal" digits the result would be vastly different. The participants can entirely relate to an ending about team oriented results!

## **STAGE PRESENTATION**

Though I developed *Total Knock Out* mainly as a close-up routine, I'll describe how I handle the routine on stage. First, invite three spectators up to help you. Work the routine exactly as I explained for the close-up version to the point you've

written your prediction on the business card. Hand it to the third helper, asking him to hold it until later, without looking at it.

Do all the mind reading sequences I've described previously. Since this is all oral with no props, this segment plays well on any size stage. For the proving sequence, invite the audience to take out their calculators or use pen and paper to prove the products are correct.

Now pick up a large pad or blackboard. (As usual, I involve my *Ultra Board*, as I'll explain in the next chapters.) Write the two spectators' totals one above another for the audience to see. Remind the audience the person at the right has held a card since you began. Ask him to look at it, then have him loudly call out the number you wrote earlier. Repeat the number yourself, to impress it on the audience. Now openly do the addition with the board facing them, so they can see the prediction being fulfilled!

While this revelation seems reversed from normal presentational structures, I've found on stage it plays more powerfully than doing the addition, getting the total, then having the helper read the number from the card.

If you're a stickler for traditional structure, try it this way: After writing the two totals on the blackboard, have the third helper copy what you have already written on the business card onto the opposite side of the blackboard in large numerals. Then do the addition of the totals, and turn the blackboard around for the climax.

Finally, here's yet another approach to presenting the effect on stage: Proceed with the routine as explained to the point where you divine the two numbers formed by the two helpers, then write the totals on the blackboard in the center of the surface. After the applause, you suddenly "remember" the business card the assistant is holding. Have him announce the digits on it. Write the number at the top of the blackboard **above** the other two numbers, near the **top** of the writing surface. Now, draw a line beneath the two persons' totals and begin adding them together. The audience will be right with you,

anticipating the climax. They will start to gasp when you are halfway through, as they realize the number appearing is the **identical** number from your business card prediction. Though this is a somewhat different manner of revealing the prediction, it is very impressive. Moreover, it changes the pace of the revelation process so it looks dissimilar to other prediction effects you use in the same performance.

However you perform it, whether on stage or close-up, you'll find *Total Knock Out* a mind-boggling piece of mentalism.



# Thanks to Spackman

What is known today as the *Clip Line* effect is actually of recent origin. Invented by British mentalist Albert Spackman, it was first published in the October 1964 issue of *Gen* magazine, under the prosaic title of *Newspaper Test*. Since then, many magicians and mentalists like U.F. Grant and Syd Bergson, have rung the changes on Spackman's method, with and without credit. During the 1970s, my friend, the late Al Mann, published a quartet of clever versions in his **SUPER CLIP LINE PLUS** book.

Spackman's basic method has been published in books for the public like Harry Lorayne's **THE MAGIC BOOK** in 1977, Karl Fulves's **SELF-WORKING MENTAL MAGIC** in 1979, and myriad others. However, it is still a very powerful effect, even in its most elementary form.

If you don't know the effect, it is this: A newspaper column, a sealed envelope, and a pair of scissors are exhibited. The envelope is placed aside as a prediction. While the performer runs the blades of the scissors down the column, a spectator is invited to call out stop at any point. The paper is cut at the point indicated. The piece flutters to the floor. The spectator picks up the paper and reads the top line. The performer now opens the envelope, showing a prediction accurately forecasting the presumably freely chosen line!

The explanation is simple: You hold the column of paper **upside-down** during the cut. The audience is too far away to see this — newsprint looks the same, either upside-down or right-side-up, from a few feet away. When the spectator picks up the cut off piece, he'll naturally hold it right-side-up. The line he reads was, in fact, at the **bottom** of the inverted column.

Thus, it will always be the **same**, no matter where he indicates you should stop and cut.

### ***CLIP LINE DELUXE***

For years I used the original *Clip Line* as the closer for my mental show. Since then, I've devised several variations of Spackman's *Newspaper Test*. Inspired by Al Mann, I worked out my *Osterlind Clip Line*, which I published in my 1984 lecture notes **ADD RICH'S TO YOUR MAGIC**. That presentation used two newspaper columns, and a sealed prediction for each column. It too became the closer for my show for some years.

*Clip Line Deluxe* is the last and best of the five methods I've developed. It's the perfected presentation I used in my shows between 1989 and 1992. In that latter year, I went over to using Sondermeyer and Schenk's wonderful *Alpha-Mental*, which I'll comment more about, and explain a sensational routine for, later in this chapter.

If you prefer not to use a gaffed paper, you'll be delighted with the version I'll give here. And, it won't cost but a few cents to do! It's immensely powerful and will totally baffle anyone familiar with the old method. Besides subliminally **proving** the inverted paper method is **not** used, the many options you give the spectators during the routine make it seem utterly impossible.

### **EFFECT**

You begin the effect by opening an envelope, then emptying it, removing a column of newsprint, two smaller coin envelopes, and a large folded piece of paper. You explain the folded paper is your prediction regarding the newspaper column. You replace the prediction in the envelope, seal it, then place it aside in full view of the spectators.

You explain the newspaper clipping is a column of want ads, then show what you've said is true by displaying it to several spectators up close. Holding the strip of newspaper at your very fingertips, and without changing position, you pick up the scissors as you invite a spectator to call stop as you run down the column with the open blades.

When the helper designates you should stop, you do so, exactly where indicated, snipping the column. The lower part flutters to the floor. Not going near the snipped-off piece, you ask the helper to pick it up and seal it in a coin envelope — either — he's free to choose.

You approach another spectator, requesting he follow the identical procedure. He tells you where to stop with the open-bladed scissors, you snip off the lower part of the column. Ask that he pick it up, and seal it in the remaining coin envelope. Again, you stand away, emphasizing you will **not** come near the cut off piece on the floor.

You now ask the first helper to put **both** envelopes behind his back and mix them. Requesting he make his selection carefully, he chooses one coin envelope, retaining the other.

With you standing away, the helper opens the envelope, and removes the strip of newspaper within. You now stress the piece of newspaper he's holding has **two sides** with **different** wording at the uppermost line of each side. The spectator confirms it does. You direct him to choose **one side** — he has a completely free selection — then read out loud the top line of the side he's chosen, so the rest of the audience can hear it.

You direct attention back to your sealed prediction, which hasn't left the audience's sight for an instant. You remind the spectators you showed the prediction before you started and haven't touched it since. You recap that each helper indicated exactly where they wanted the newspaper strip cut; the strips were mixed without you ever touching them; one was freely selected — the other is still in possession of the helper. The side of the strip the helper wished to use was also freely selected, then read to the audience. Everything is completely aboveboard.

You now pick up the prediction envelope and snip off the end. Clearly showing the envelope otherwise empty, you extract the single sheet of paper and unfold it. Written on the paper in large bold letters are the **exact words** the assisting spectator just read to the audience!

After the climax, the assisting spectator not only leaves the stage as baffled as the other audience members, but takes the

envelopes and pieces of newspaper he's used with him. No clue remains.

Inspired by some thoughts by Charles Reynolds at the 1988 "Thirteen Invitational" get-together using the *Hobson's Choice* idea, and several ideas of my own, you've just read the effect I finally settled on.

## PREPARATION

You will need a column cut from the want ad section of your newspaper. Unlike other versions of the Spackman method, the column you pick should have ads on **both** sides.

Make your predictions — there are two — on two eight-and-one-half by 11-inch sheets of paper, with a broad marking pen. Each of your forecasts predicts the top line of one side of the want ad column. Before you write the predictions, first fold the paper in fourths by folding up the bottom quarter, then another quarter, and finally the last. Now write the predictions so each **covers** the sheet from top to bottom in **block letters**, then refold the sheets. This pre-fold is important for heightening the drama of the climax, as you'll see when I get to it.

You will also need to make a simple *Double Envelope* by cutting the flap and address side off an envelope, then inserting it into another matching envelope. I use large kraft paper envelopes, made of #60 heavyweight manila, measuring four-and-one-half by 10-and-three-eighths-inches. This larger size and weight serves two purposes: The envelopes are opaque, making the gimmicked envelope impossible to see through. They will also give you plenty of room so you won't cut the prediction, when you snip the envelope open at the climax.

You will need two empty coin envelopes. The coin envelopes I use are #5-1/2 manila. These envelopes measure three-and-one-eighth-inches by five-and-one-half-inches. This size allows the spectators to insert the newspaper pieces into them without fumbling. You can get any of the envelopes I've described at the office super stores.

The final bit of preparation is this: Place one of the folded predictions — you need to remember **which** — into the section of the *Double Envelope* behind the insert. Lick the rear flap

and seal it to the front one. The envelope should now look unprepared.

Place the second folded prediction in the open compartment of the envelope with the want ad column, and the two coin envelopes. Have a pair of scissors available.

## PERFORMANCE

This routine is appropriate for either intimate stand-up or large stage shows. I'll describe it as if I'm performing on a smaller platform.

To begin the routine, open the envelope, removing the column, prediction, and coin envelopes. Place the coin envelopes aside on the table. Casually let the envelope be seen empty by the spectators, as you explain the folded prediction concerns the newspaper column. Replace the prediction in the envelope, seal it, then place it somewhere prominent so it's constantly in view of the audience. Emphasize the envelope will never leave their sight.

Display the column of want ads by holding it genuinely at the top. Your fingers conceal just the topmost few lines — the lines of the final prediction. You now approach a few spectators, showing them the column, allowing them to see all is legitimate.

Step back and hold the column by the top as you pick up the scissors. Explain how you will run down the column with the open-bladed scissors until a spectator says "Stop!" Choose a spectator to assist you.

When you begin to run the scissors down the column, make sure you start a few inches **down** the column. When spectator calls out "Stop!" cut the column, allowing the lower part to flutter to the floor. Pick up **both** coin envelopes, approach the spectator and offer him one. After he takes it, ask the spectator to seal the piece on the floor in it, as you emphasize, "I won't come near it."

As you place the other coin envelope on the table, nail nick it. Then approach another spectator. However, by now you have **inverted** the piece of newspaper remaining in your hand! With so much going on as the first spectator retrieves the paper, then



seals it in the coin envelope, this is very easy to do. There is no reason for the audience to be paying attention to you then. In fact, the audience doesn't even know you will use a second spectator — your actions have been so honest up to now.

The second spectator tells you where you are to stop. Again, you snip the paper where requested, allowing the lower part to fall to the floor. This time, of course, the spectator gets what is really the original **top** piece of the column, with the predicted lines at the top.

At this point, I crumple up the unused portion of the column, then put it in my coat pocket. Though it would be quite difficult for anyone to learn the secret from the three pieces, I do this just for safety's sake.

After this second cut, move away. Again stress you will **not** come near the cut off piece on the floor. Have a nearby spectator get the second (nail nicked) envelope, and hand it to the person. Ask the second spectator to retrieve the bit of newspaper on the floor, then seal his newspaper piece in the envelope. Once he's done this, have him hand it to the first helper.

Let me stop for a moment and explain some fine points. Yes, you could have marked one of the two coin envelopes ahead of time. However, I do not. During the "heat" of a show it's easy to get mixed up. If you do, it could be fatal to the effect. To safeguard against a mix-up, I always start with two unmarked envelopes and always mark the second envelope **when I put it down**. Thus, when I direct the assisting spectator to hand that envelope to the second spectator, I **am sure** the proper piece of paper is in the nicked envelope. Second, it gives an impression of entire freedom: the audience will remember the first spectator chose what envelope he wanted to use, and I was nowhere near the second envelope when it was given to the second helper. Finally, you will be leaving almost everything with the audience at the end. Spectators are smarter than you think ... someone might notice a pencil dot, or snipped corner, but a nail nick looks natural.

This leads to the lovely bit that convinces the audience all is fair. You ask the first spectator to put **both** envelopes behind

his back and mix them. Ask him to deliberate carefully, decide on **either** of the envelopes, and bring one forward from behind his back. If the envelope he hands you is the marked envelope, then emphasize he had a free choice, that it is the one you will use. Tell him he can keep and open the other later, just to make sure that everything is straight.

If he brings forth the unmarked envelope, you place it aside, commenting he still has one **you have not touched**. That, of course, is *Hobson's Choice* — though the spectator seems to have options, you get the right envelope into play, no matter what.

Now, have the spectator open the envelope, removing the strip of newspaper within. Point out the piece of newspaper has **two sides** with **completely different** wording on the top line of each side. Ask the spectator to confirm this. When he does, tell him to settle on **one side**, emphasizing he has a free selection of either side. Once he's decided, have him read the top line of the side he's chosen in a loud voice. This is the clincher ... it seems the spectator has had **complete freedom** throughout the test.

After he reads the line, direct attention to your sealed prediction — the envelope you placed on view at the beginning of the effect. Now is the time to recap for dramatic effect: "Remember, **before** we started, I showed you a written prediction ... I was **committed** to what I wrote. I sealed it in an envelope. I haven't touched it since. It's been over there in full view."

Pointing to each helper in turn, you continue: "Then I had **you**, and **you**, each tell me exactly where you wanted me to cut a piece of newspaper. I didn't touch the pieces." Focusing on the first helper, you say, "**You** mixed them up, and **you** told me which one you wanted to use. I even gave you a choice of which side of the paper you wanted ... **you** chose that too. Look at my prediction!"

Pick up the envelope, then use the scissors to cut off the end. Open the cut end of the envelope to the side with the prediction matching what the spectator read. Then, squeeze the envelope so the other side is covered by the paper flap. You

now remove the correct prediction — the other will be hidden, locked into the other side. Hold the prediction up so it stays in view. Flash the interior of the envelope to the audience, then crumple it and put it in your pocket. Because the spectators saw just one prediction in the envelope at the beginning of the routine, this procedure is entirely convincing.

Now, grasp the folded prediction by the upper left corner with your left hand. Use your right hand to unfold the paper downward, building suspense and impact as the audience sees the prediction revealed line-by-line. When the prediction is finally unfolded, you're holding the paper by diagonally opposite corners. Pause, then give the paper a hearty **snap** for your applause cue! The response should be highly enthusiastic.

Hand the prediction to the assisting spectator, as well as both small envelopes and the pieces of newspaper, then excuse your helper.

## **ROUTINING A MENTAL SHOW**

As I mentioned earlier, I used the standard — the original — *Clip Line* effect as the finale to my act. This was in my early days, before I developed original material. You may be interested in knowing the whole configuration of that show. If you're just getting started, it may help you plan your own show.

Earlier in this book I mention how much I respect **THE TARBELL COURSE IN MAGIC**. For instance, the third volume of that series has an outstanding opening chapter called "Routining a Magic Show." I think every performer who wants to do a stand-up act should **study** this essay. In it, Tarbell discusses the structure, drama, balance, pacing, and flow that make a successful audience-pleasing presentation. While Tarbell's **examples of particular performers** may be out-of-date, I believe his advice is as cogent today as when it was first published in the original 1927 **TARBELL SYSTEM OF MAGIC** correspondence course.

When I began my professional career 25 years ago, I used Tarbell's five-segment "vaudeville magic routine" example to conceive my first stand-up act. I discovered Tarbell's advice was

right on the button. I still use the same five-part structure nowadays.

Then, my opener was the *Mental Broadcast Slate*, a standard dealer's item based on Hen Fetsch's *Mental Epic*. This was a strong initial effect because I could read three spectators' minds without them ever leaving their seats, or having them write anything down.

Incidentally, I modified the slate by gluing a thin sheet of plywood into the back frame, then painting it with blackboard paint. This not only made the prop look more innocent, but allowed me to use the back for my second effect, Ted Annemann's *Extra-Sensory Perception*, using 32 five-inch by five-inch symbol cards. You'll find it in several sources: the original *Jinx* magazine, the **JINX PROGRAM NUMBER 2: A MENTAL CLUB ACT** booklet, and in the classic **PRACTICAL MENTAL EFFECTS**. I used the back of the slate to place the cards on, for the spectators' actions of lifting off the cards. (Since the gimmicked slate locked, it was ideal for adding the aura of fairness.) Then, completing the effect, I would draw the selected designs on the back of the slate. By the way, I didn't use a prompter — I memorized the order of the designs. I still have that set of cards I painstakingly made!

The third item was an effect with jumbo cards, where I divined all the cards in a packet "randomly" cut off by a spectator. I perform a vastly updated presentation of this in my current show, using my *Breakthrough Card System*. In those days, I used the *Eight Kings* setup, but called the cards off in random order so there was no discernible pattern to the stack. The way I did this was direct: I had a Dunninger-style threefold screen type of affair with a pad. (Now, of course, I use my *Thought Scan*.) After showing the pad with no writing on it, I used it to jot down notes. In reality, after determining the number of cards the spectator had, and the starting point of the part of the stack he or she held, I listed all the cards on the pad, then could call them out in any order. To cover this, I explained that writing down my thoughts allowed me to concentrate.

This also introduced the props I'd be using in the next sequence — I always try to use props like the blackboard and

pad in multiple effects. Here I passed out two-inch by two-inch pieces of paper, had the audience write down their thoughts, and fold the slips. Then I passed out envelopes for the collection of the slips.

As I collected the stuffed envelopes, I stole slips from them, putting the slips in my pocket, just like Dunninger was doing in the 1920s, and Kreskin still does today. By the way, I had double-sided Scotch Tape® on the edges of the uppermost paper in the folder. These were hidden by the flaps of the screen. Later, I would get the stolen slips into the pad, open them, then stick them to the tape as I began my mind reading demonstration. A few minutes later, I had about eight slips open, stuck to the tape, right in front of me! There was no danger of the billets falling out, even if I held the pad upright. The flaps hid the slips from all angles.

Finally, I put the pad away, took out the prediction envelope and scissors, and did *Clip Line* for my closer, presented with some of the touches from my *Clip Line Deluxe* I've just described. By then, I had all my props back in my case, set to get off the stage immediately as *Clip Line* was over.

### **AIR WAVE TELEPATHY**

As I mentioned, *Clip Line Deluxe* is an extremely **strong** routine. I used it constantly in my performances for three years. However, in 1992, German performers Michael Sondermeyer and Uwe Schenk developed what is so far the **ultimate** twist on the Spackman original — though it is **not** a prediction — calling it *Alpha-Mental*.

In this effect, the paper is shown unprepared (though it is cleverly gaffed), clipped anywhere the spectator wishes, then the spectator just **thinks** of **any word** in the top several lines. You **instantly** begin to call off the selected word.

Marketed in the English-language version exclusively by Jeff Busby, I got it, then **immediately** added it to my show. I should tell you I rarely add new material to my act, and when I do, they're usually my creations! As I wrote Jeff after I began to use *Alpha-Mental*, "This is one of the finest **professional** mental

routines to come along in years. It's a 5-star blockbuster effect!"

I added numerous handling ideas and presentational points to the Sondermeyer-Schenk effect, making it into a feature two-phase miracle that suited my style. It was the highlight of a show I worked during Christmas of 1992 for the then-Governor of Connecticut, Lowell Weicker, at the Executive Mansion. Governor Weicker participated in the routine, then wrote me a terrific letter afterward, saying "You were truly amazing! ... You made me a believer!" Subsequently, I did several more shows for the Governor's parties at the mansion, including one which all the living ex-Governors of the state attended.

In 1993, Jeff Busby put my professional routine on the market with the *Alpha-Mental* package, as part of his "after-service" for his customers. It's a comprehensive manuscript describing my routine **exactly** as I do it, with all my patter and handling points. (Governor Weicker's letter, on his letterhead, is reproduced in full on the front page of the manuscript.) As I write this, it's still available from Jeff. I recommend it highly and continue to **use** it — it's one of the strongest pieces of mentalism ever. But, if the supply of the necessary gimmicked materials runs out and *Alpha-Mental* becomes unavailable, I'll have no hesitation going back to my *Clip Line Deluxe* routine!

In my travels across the country, I often do interviews on radio talk shows to promote my performances. While I've found mentalism between you and **the host** can be effective establishing your reputation as a mystery worker over the air, an astounding effect you can use **reading the mind of a random caller** is extremely rare ... and I'd say one most mentalists would pay top dollar for! It would work equally well on a television show, where interviewees answer questions asked by callers. So, I'm rather reluctant to pass the following idea along, but Jeff engaged in a bit of arm-twisting. If you have *Alpha-Mental* and need something sensational to stun listeners and callers on your next radio appearance, this is the ticket.

Here's how I work it: During the interview, the host puts a random caller on the line. I have the host indicate the stopping

point as I run the scissors down the newspaper clipping, cutting where he wishes, and handing it to him. (Those who have *Alpha-Mental* know the spectator — in this instance the radio show host — can be right next to you without seeing anything.) As the host describes what is happening to the listening audience, I am escorted out of the room by a station employee into another studio, where I can't hear the show.

While I am in seclusion, the host slowly reads the top four lines of the newspaper article to the caller. After she has heard them, the host asks her to just "think" of any of the larger words she'd heard and concentrate on it. Then they retrieve me.

Now, I quickly begin the revelation. I guarantee as you reveal the mentally selected word letter-by-letter, both the listener and the host will flip: You'll get audible gasps and exclamations of surprise over the air! This dumbfounds everyone.

What's perfect about this for radio is the other station listeners **hear** all the different words the caller has to choose from. No two even **sound alike**. *Air Wave Telepathy* is equally staggering as my *Some Total Radio*, another "over the air" mental routine I gave to Larry Becker for his 1992 book, **STUNNERS!**. If you don't have *Alpha-Mental*, you're neglecting a dynamite effect that never fails to make their jaws drop, whether for a formal show, or the way I've just described it.



## Supernatural Sight

In essence, this closing chapter is designed as a series of lessons in professional mentalism. Like most of the material in *DYNAMIC MYSTERIES*, it is meant to teach principles of **performing** powerful effects, not merely the methods of tricks.

In 1987, I released my *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* through Jeff Busby. Besides providing perfectly made apparatus, Jeff published a comprehensive book — 50 pages of small type — called *THE BLINDFOLD BOOK* to go with my prop. The prop drew raves and is now a permanent part of many working mentalist's repertoires. The book was proclaimed "the best book on blindfold work **ever** published." With all due modesty, I think so too!

I still use my invention, and the effects Jeff and I explained in *THE BLINDFOLD BOOK*. But, during the past dozen years I haven't stopped creating and perfecting routines with my blindfold. What I'll be explaining here is the **complete method** of the three-phase feature routine I've successfully used professionally. Naturally, I use the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* when I do it. (And, I should say this: As I write this, Jeff does have a few of my blindfolds available, but with no instructions. He still supplies them to mentalists who know the "work" and want backup units, or have lost them, or had them stolen. *THE BLINDFOLD BOOK* is out of print. Everything needed to put it in print again was destroyed by an unfortunate accident some years ago. If you're interested in having the full package when it's available in the future, write Jeff and let him know.)

However, I want to emphasize you can use **any** gaffed blind-



fold that allows secret straight-ahead vision to do my routine, or the components. Additionally, even if you **never** use a blindfold or my entire routine, you will encounter many valuable ideas in this chapter. I'll give you some inside advice that hasn't seen print **anywhere else** — ideas I use in other ways in my professional shows. Furthermore, the final segment of the routine, the *Test Conditions Design Divination*, though outstanding in the context I'll explain here, is equally stunning as a stand-alone effect **without a blindfold**.

If you're serious about mind-blowing mentalism, I feel you'll profit greatly by studying this chapter and applying the principles I'll cover here.

## EFFECT

First, I'll describe how it should look when you're presenting the full routine. Immediately after, I'll make some remarks that will have a bearing on how you may want to present it.

You ask two spectators to assist by coming onto the stage. On the table holding the blindfold are a few large Band-Aids®, a deck of jumbo cards, a blackboard, and a piece of chalk. Your helpers inspect the blindfold, then place it on you after taping your eyes.

An assisting spectator is asked to pick up the blackboard. Then, the helpers are each asked to remove some personal item they're carrying on themselves, and put them on the blackboard. You move your hands slowly above the objects, never touching them, then ask them to place the objects away. Addressing each spectator in turn, you begin to divulge the "impressions" you got from the objects, identifying each person's item.

For the next phase, you ask one of the spectators to pick up the deck of jumbo cards, mix it, then remove a half-dozen cards from **different parts of the deck**. He is asked to mix the packet of cards, give them to you, and return to his seat. Holding the **faces of the cards toward the audience**, you peel off the front card, asking the audience to concentrate on the image of the card, as you hold it high. You ask the whole audience to try projecting it to you. You receive the

impression of the color, then the suit, then value, correctly naming every card one-by-one!

Finally, you mention the remaining spectator has a sealed envelope in his possession. You remark this spectator drew a design on a piece of paper **under test conditions**, which you specify. He confirms each step of what he did. You ask him to hand you the blackboard and chalk. Asking him to concentrate on his design, you slowly draw something on the blackboard, then put it aside, surface-down. When you're finished, you whip off the blindfold and pull the Band-Aids® from your eyes. Now you request the helper open the envelope, remove and unseal the image from its wrapping, show it to the audience, and explain what it is to those too far away to see. You turn over the blackboard, showing you have **duplicated the drawing**, and take your applause!

By the way, **nothing is gimmicked**. No evidence is left behind. The spectators are free to check everything on stage before, after, and as you're using it.

During the routine several principles are used in varying ways. I'll discuss each in turn. I've explained tiny parts of what I do in the past, but not **all** of it until now.

Part of it — a single page on the method behind the card reading — appeared in my 1989 lecture notes, ***RICH WITH A TWIST***. A quite brief description of the routine, with a marginal and incomplete explanation, was published in my dear friend Bascom Jones's ***Magick*** #418 during 1989. And, in 1990, a version of *Paroptic Psychometry I* was included on my ***Challenge Magic!*** video. However, this is the first time everything appears together ... and considerably more!

As I explained in my ***SEAFIRE SEQUENCE*** book, I do not do my routines entirely by rote. I prefer to use them as a **framework** within which I interact with the audience. The routine I've described is intended to give you a structure to make it simple for you to envision the whole of *Supernatural Sight* and what it can be. However, it is an **idealized** presentation I only use if the occasion calls for a **complete** blindfold act. As an act it plays beautifully — the three segments are extremely different, and the routine ends with an impossible-seeming finale.

I have used the entire routine several times in presentations for corporate clients like Starter Sports and CIGNA Insurance. But, more often I do shorter shows, and don't want to be on stage blindfolded for a long time during my performance. Depending on the client, the amount of time I'll be working on stage, and how I feel about the audience, I **edit** the routine to fit the circumstances. All three segments of the routine are tried and proven, but more often than not I use just **one** in a show.

To make it easier for you to follow, I'll explain the concepts and methods behind each **effect** in the routine in detail, as if you're doing it stand-alone. Then, after you fully understand all the sequences, I'll give you a synopsis of how you would handle the routine if you decide to perform it complete.

### ***PAROPTIC PSYCHOMETRY I***

I frequently use this presentation on smaller platforms, and at trade show appearances in a company's booth. As a stand-alone presentation, it's quick and enormously effective. It also takes the effect away from a *Seeing with the Fingertips* or *Sightless Vision* presentation, which I've never liked. In those types of routines, I feel the method is too close to the effect. I separate the method from effect by putting "distance" between them, giving the mixed interpretation of both *Psychometry* and mind reading.

All you need is the blindfold and a blackboard, or a tray. I use my *Ultra Board* instead of a tray, because I like to reuse objects I've performed with earlier in the show, tacitly demonstrating the innocence of those objects. If you know the *Ultra Board* method, you know anyone can handle it and never guess the secret.

Invite two spectators to assist you. You introduce what will happen with the spectators by saying, "I'll ask you to serve as the eyes of the other members of the audience. I want you to inspect this blindfold, and assist me when I don the blindfold." Having said that, you go through the inspection process for the blindfold. Have a spectator try it on, then verify the opacity, if your method allows it. Those who know my method already

know the *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* has those attributes, and additionally, allows me to have my eyes taped with the two oversize Band-Aids®, as described in **THE BLINDFOLD BOOK**. After you have the blindfold on, you allow the spectators to confirm you truly cannot see.

You say, "This blindfold is designed to block sight, the strongest of the five senses. I want to see with my **mind**, not my eyes." You ask a spectator to pick up the blackboard, grasping it by the edges.

You then ask each helper to remove some personal object from their pockets and put it on the blackboard. You say, "It can be anything ... a piece of personal jewelry, a credit card, a photo, or even a lucky coin. The two objects should be different ... distinctive ... associated with you."

Once the objects are on the blackboard surface, you wave your hands slowly above them, fingers outstretched, never touching them to get your "impression." Of course, you can **see** exactly what they've put down and remember the details. Now, direct the spectators to put the objects away, and **concentrate** on a mental image of them.

At this point, when I'm performing **only** this effect, the blindfold comes off, and I pull the Band-Aids® from my eyes. If you've watched my **Challenge Magic!** video, you already have a good idea of how the remainder of this plays, and how I frame what I say. I give the impression of reading the spectators' minds, as if I'm receiving a gradual picture of what the objects are, and whom they belong to, stringing the revelations out, having the spectators affirm my impressions as I progress.

On my video, one spectator put his wallet on the blackboard, and the other, a round plastic disk with some printing on it. For the first spectator, I led into identifying his object this way: "I felt as though one object was organic ... as if it was alive at one time." I then gradually revealed it was leather. Only then did I seem to grasp **who** the thought waves were coming from: "By any chance was one of the objects made of leather? Was that in fact your object?" I turn directly to the spectator whom I've just identified as the owner of one object and now seem to focus on his thoughts as I continue: "Was it ... is it ... in fact your wallet?" And, imme-

diately, I become specific: "A **brown** leather wallet! Am I right?" The spectator will, of course, agree.

For the second spectator, I began getting the impression of his object this way: "Your object ... at first I was going to say a half-dollar ... a silver dollar ... a coin of some sort, but that's not right is it?" I got the answer, "No," which actually affirmed what I was saying and dramatized the unclear impression I was supposedly getting. Following up, I'll head for "Yes" answers several times, each time as I supposedly receive clearer and clearer notions of the spectator's thoughts: "But you're thinking right now that's close." The spectator replies, "Yes." You say, "It wasn't metal ... it was plastic?" Again, the answer is "Yes." You say, "Are you thinking of white plastic?" Maybe he wasn't, but the way you ask the question gets an affirmative reply, implying you caught his **exact thought**. You proceed in this vein: "There was some kind of writing on it ... and you're thinking of that right now?" Perhaps not, but the audience again gets the impression you seem to have caught his thought as he replies, "Yes." You say, "Would you picture in your mind what the writing is?" Another, "Yes," though you haven't told him anything. Now, you get down to his specific thought: "I'm getting a word ... something like ... like sargeant ... or something of that nature?" He'll confirm it. Then, to cap it off, you repeat, "Is that it?" And, the reply is another "Yes."

Those of you who know about gimmicked blindfolds may not immediately understand how this presentation affects a group of laymen. For the moment, try to imagine what the spectators think has happened: They've seen two objects put in front of you that you could not possibly see. You got an impression not by touching the objects, but by simply waving your hands above them. The objects are then hidden and your sight restored. Only then do you begin getting the **thoughts** of the spectators, identifying each object, then who owns it, revealing the particulars of the objects **as the spectators think of them**.

The perception of a lay audience of what happens in this effect is **vastly** dissimilar to a *Sightless Vision* routine in which you seem to **see** through a supposedly impenetrable barrier.

## PAROPTIC PSYCHOMETRY II

Using the same methodology, but changing the audience's perception of what is happening is an important principle. To demonstrate the worth of that concept, I'll now explain how I regularly present the **same effect** when I do a show for a larger audience. As you read it, you'll note this presentation leaves the impression I'm reading the **minds of the whole audience!**

You begin the same way, with the patter I recounted in *Paroptic Psychometry I*, after having invited two spectators on stage to help you. Have them check out the blindfold, then put on your tape and the blindfold. This time, you dispense with the blackboard. After your introduction, send one of your helpers into the audience to collect two objects. Have him place the objects on the table after they've been gathered.

You're standing on stage blindfolded, but of course you **see** both objects, and **from whom they were obtained**. Since you're standing beside the table, you can easily memorize the distinctive details of the objects. But, to add a throw off, you now walk away to the other side of the stage, and **turn your back**. Only now do you direct a helper to pick up **either** object, then request he step to the front of the platform.

With your back still turned, a quick sideways glance **at the table** after you've directed him to step to the front of the stage, shows which of the objects he's chosen, **by which remains**. The sideways glance is a natural action, but from this point forward, keep your back turned to the table, the audience, and the helper.

Direct the helper to hold the object up high, so **the audience** can concentrate on it. Encourage the audience to visualize the object, then project their thoughts to you. Now, you begin to receive "impressions from the audience," and describe the first object.

But, there's a kicker: Once you've described the object — let's say it's a set of keys — you ask the helper to return the object to the owner, then ask that person to stand. **With your back still turned**, you begin to articulate thoughts about the

owner: "I'm getting the impression that the person who owns the keys is a distinctive person ... who is wearing a gray suit ... with a pink tie ... Is that correct?" You'll get a "Yes," and a burst of applause.

Still facing away from the table, ask the second helper to pick up the remaining object, step to the front of the stage, and hold it high. Of course, you already know what it is, but the effect so far is that a helper has collected two objects which you couldn't possibly have seen, picked **either** while your back was turned, and you have not only received the thoughts from the audience about what the object was, but also psychometrized by "remote control" **whom** the object belonged to.

Apparently you still have no idea what the last object is, so you describe that as you again "catch the thought waves" the audience is projecting. Again, the object is returned to the spectator who lent it — let's say this time it's a lipstick — and you start to announce your impressions of the owner: "I'm getting the impression that the lipstick belongs to a lady with brown hair ... she's about five-foot-four ... and I'm getting the impression she's wearing something bright ... a red dress ... Is that right?" By then, you're removing the blindfold, and you'll certainly have applause!

As I said, basically the same method, but the twist in presentation dramatically alters the audience's perception of what has happened: Since you're not supposed to know just whom your helper picked in the audience, or **either** of the objects, much less which has been selected, the ruse of the freedom of choice while your back is turned makes this very impressive, as does the descriptions of the objects' owners. This presentation also leads perfectly into the next effect of the jumbo card reading, where the presentation is, again, that you read the minds of the audience.

### ***ABOUT USING JUMBO CARDS***

Before I get into the explanation of the method I use for this jumbo card reading routine, I want to give you some of my thoughts about how and why I use jumbo cards in my show.

Some mentalists refuse to use even a deck of standard playing cards in their acts, believing what they're doing will be perceived as "magic tricks." Those who buy that notion will consider me significantly more heretical when I say I use jumbo cards constantly in my work! I've used them since I developed my first stand-up mental show in 1974. I've **never** had a problem with my audiences thinking I do mere "card tricks" — **they don't**.

I take heart in the fact that such a fine worker as the legendary Paul Fox used jumbo cards in his mental act during the 1930s, in his stand-up presentation of his *Miracle Gimmick*. (Which is, in case you don't know it, one of the most convincing and amazing mental routines with cards ever invented. As I mentioned in the manuscript for my *Thought Scan* act, it's a favorite with me.)

In the context of my current "number one" show I always use my *Breakthrough Card System* with jumbo cards for what I call my *Card Calling* routine, much in the same way I outlined in my words on "Routining a Mental Show" in the previous chapter. I'll give you the **exact** patter I use when I start the routine. I use essentially the same patter when I introduce the *Supernatural Sight* routine, but then I have **two** spectators on stage.

There's something additional you need to know in understanding the scenario I'll describe: Usually, before my stand-up act goes on, I've had the opportunity to meet with and be introduced to several of those who will later watch my show. These may be the corporate people who have hired me, their friends, other executives, or VIPs attending the convention or corporate event. As I encounter these small groups or individuals, I always do something for them: My *Surrounded Slow-Motion Center Tear* (which I do **dozens** of times a night), and some of my original metal bending effects. And, I **always** work alternately between my *Breakthrough Card System*, my *Radar Deck*, and other methods I've explained in this book, doing "brain-busters" with cards. By the time I'm ready to go on stage, several members of the



audience are already **convinced** I'm a miracle worker, and are really looking forward to the show.

As you read my lines, you'll notice that I link the cards quickly to a gambling — not magic — theme. (You may also notice how I tell the audience who I am, and where I've been, without name-dropping at length, the way Kreskin does!)

If I'm performing my *Card Calling*, I start the effect by getting a male spectator on stage. I address both him and the audience simultaneously:

"Many people ask me if I can use any of my abilities for gambling? The answer is ... **Yeah!** ... I live in Connecticut where we have Foxwoods, the world's largest casino. I just did a performance at the Taj Mahal in Atlantic City a few months ago. I've been to Monte Carlo three times over the past few years. Even when I traveled to Beijing, China, I discovered they love to gamble and use American playing cards all the time."

I continue:

"Earlier tonight, I had several of you just look through a deck of cards and simply think of one. Then I guessed what you were thinking. Where are those people now ... raise your hands ... am I telling the truth?"

At this point, several hands will pop up throughout the audience, and these spectators nod their heads, "Yes." These will, of course, be spectators who participated in my preceding work with cards.

I continue:

"When I'm standing up close, it's easy for you to see a normal-size playing card. However, a typical show for me is between 200 and 500 people. My largest performance to date was for the Pacific Bell Yellow Pages in Oakland, California. There were over 2000 people in my audience that night! But, even in a smaller room, it would be hard for the people in the back to see a regular-size card. So, because of that, I have these big ones!"

With that, I remove the jumbo cards from my case and display them, continuing:

"Besides being a lot bigger than a normal-sized deck, they are, in fact, identical in every other way. They are not something special — you can buy decks of cards like these in some stationery stores and certain specialty shops in shopping malls."

From that point I go into my *Card Calling* routine, or begin the *Supernatural Sight* by starting the patter for the introduction of the blindfold, as I explained in *Paroptic Psychometry I*. I should note that I **never** do more than a single card effect in a stage show; it's one **or** the other, never both.

Now that you understand how I get the jumbos into play, I'll explain how the card reading effect I use in *Supernatural Sight* works.

### ***EXPANDING LEIPZIG'S SECRET***

Yes, you **could** use a marked deck to identify the half-dozen cards the on stage assistant selected. I don't. Why go to all that effort to mark a deck, when you don't need to? Besides, I hold the card far away from me — no matter what the size of the marks, I don't want to bother straining my vision — I wear glasses normally. So, my cards are not marked, but I have a five-by-seven-inch clue **I can't miss** ... in fact, I can read the cards nearly as well blindfolded, from the backs, as if I were looking at the faces!

I discovered the cheap jumbo decks of cards manufactured in the Orient have a unique characteristic: Though they look perfectly ordinary, if you hold them up with a light projecting on the front, **you can see right through them!**

This works with several brands offered under varying trade names. For instance, there is the "Crown" brand, which shows a clown riding a unicycle on the case that works well. I believe they're made in Taiwan. Bascom Jones told me it works with a Japanese brand named "Victoria." There's a brand called "Country Club" from Hong Kong that Jeff Busby noted works. There are other no-name versions of indeterminate origin. You can

obtain some of these decks in stationery, joke stores, and magic shops. If you can't locate the correct cards locally, contact Jeff.

The reason this works is these cards are about half as thick as a deck of Jumbo Bicycle® cards, or the Piatnik "Knightsbridge" cards from Austria. The Oriental cards don't have the special carbonized center layer designed to eliminate see-through. I was excited when I discovered this, then began using it with my blindfold. When I told Jeff about it over the telephone, he paused, then said, "Well, it's a great idea with the jumbos and the blindfold, but did you know it was a hush-hush thing that Nate Leipzig used, and is still almost unknown?"

He went on to explain that it was a big secret of part of Leipzig's stage act and does **not** appear in *DAI VERNON'S TRIBUTE TO NATE LEIPZIG*. Instead, it was recorded by Victor Farelli, who knew Leipzig intimately just after the turn-of-the-century. Farelli revealed it as the third part of Leipzig's four-part *Ubiquitous Cards* routine, which appeared in *Hugard's Magic Monthly* during the early 1950s.

Jeff also mentioned Leipzig used the famous "Steamboat Plaid" brand of cards because of their transparency. He added that Leipzig had sold the secret through his close friend Henry Hardin, the American magic dealer who persuaded him to go on the stage. Hardin sold **only** the printed instructions, as the *Self-Forcing Pack of Cards*, for a few dollars — a stiff price in 1907!

So, I can't claim the basic method, though I discovered it on my own, and have used it to fool many magicians. With jumbo cards and the way I use it **blindfolded**, it is a thoroughly baffling component of my routine. Even magic dealers don't seem to know about this fantastic property of the Oriental jumbos, so please help me out: Don't go into a magic shop asking for a deck of transparent jumbo cards! Just experiment yourself and **guard this valuable secret!**

Since most stand-up performing venues have a strong front light projecting on the performer, this idea is tailor-made for one of the strongest mental effects you can do.

If you want to present this as a solo effect, here's how you work it: After introducing the jumbo cards, invite a spectator

on stage to examine your blindfold. Deliver the lines about the prop outlined in *Paroptic Psychometry I*. After you're blindfolded, have him mix the cards if he wants to, then look through the deck removing a half-dozen cards. He has a free choice of what cards he removes, and you underscore these can be from **anywhere** in the deck.

Tell the helper to mix the six cards face-down, so even he doesn't know the order. Have him hand them to you face-down, then return to his seat in the audience. Holding the cards in front of you, remove just one card, and hold it up as you ask the audience to concentrate on it, and **project their thoughts to you**.

Here's the correct way to do it: Hold the packet in front of you about chest-height and forward. Peel off the face card of the packet with the right hand, move it **forward**, get the identity, then move your right hand **up and to the right**. You hold the card up high and off to the right side, as you keep your face **toward** the audience. You have plenty of time to **see** the identity of the card shining through to the back, as it passes from the front of the packet and up. Take your time. Don't hurry. It looks very natural to hold the card high. It also puts the "mental distance" between the glimpse and when you pretend to receive the audience's thoughts, dramatically revealing each card.

As a solo test, it's short and sweet. Yet, from the audience's perspective, everything looks as fair as possible.

Don't worry about the assisting spectator or the audience spotting the secret: Because the audience is on the wrong side of the spotlight, and due to the helper either handling the cards face-up or face-down at waist level, there is no danger of exposure. When you start to read the cards, that spectator is back in his seat.

Working it during the *Supernatural Sight* routine is no problem, if you have the spectator standing to the side, slightly in front of you.

*My Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* is absolutely perfect for this test: It can be rigidly examined; there's no gaff to find; it looks substantial and impressive; you can get it on and off

quickly; and you have clear straight-ahead vision instantly. However, you may have a method that works for you. If so, I hope you'll try this idea.

Now, before I reveal the nuances of the design duplication I use as a climax to the *Supernatural Sight* routine, I'd like to chat with you a bit about pre-show work.

### **ABOUT MODERN PRE-SHOW WORK**

I have some subjects to discuss here that may make my point of view more understandable to magicians and mentalists. When the late Bascom Jones gave an exceedingly brief outline of what he dubbed my "powerful, audience-tested blindfold routine," in *Magick* #418, the **complete** explanation he gave for my climactic effect was this:

"The final test is the clincher, since it looks so impossible. Duplication of the design, word, or thought-of number is achieved by approaching the volunteer **before** the show, and using the center tear, billet switch, or impression device to secretly steal the person's thought."

Actually, those words in what Bascom chose to name *The Sensitives* present a gross misconception of what I do. Here's a flat statement: **I do not use hidden pre-show work with clipboards or billets.** There are compelling reasons why I make such a blunt statement.

Since the days of Anna Eva Fay and her "waxed pads," to well beyond Alexander "The Man Who Knows" and his *Miracle in Modern Seership* clipboard of the 1920s, the old books were filled with wonderful routines where people were "boarded" coming into a theater. During the show, the audience was stunned to have the mindreader just walk on stage and begin "reading their thoughts."

Today, there are several clever impression devices on the market: Clipboards, drawing boards, pads, and the like, using all manner of advanced technical methods to get information. So, you would think such an act would be more potent now.

The problem is this: Performing situations have changed over the years. In the heyday of vaudeville mentalism, the pre-show

work was kept well hidden — relatively few knew what happened before the performance. When these methods were devised, there were no cinemas, rock concerts, and other diversions we have today. A magician or mindreader coming to town was a major event with posters everywhere advertising his appearance. People bought tickets with tremendous anticipation, filed into the theater to be entertained, then went their separate ways. The audience in those vast theaters was mostly strangers; very few had a chance to talk to one another afterward. There was no “checking up” **among a group** the next day.

Today, many entertainers like me do corporate work, with shows in country clubs, conference centers, and hotel banquet facilities. The audience members usually know one another, and are either friends, or work together. Frequently, when I am flown in to do a show, it is for a single night of a three-to-four-day seminar or conference.

Early in my career, I discovered the attendees would spend hours the following day discussing my show. If they discovered what appeared to be a “spontaneous miracle” during my performance was really set up beforehand, it would not only lessen the worth of my act, but even make them feel cheated. The impression this leaves is almost the same as if they’ve been lied to.

This happened at a conference show I couldn’t work because of a booking conflict. My agent had a noted mentalist fill in for me, and he did pre-show work. Yes, he killed the audience **that night**, but during breakfast the next morning, the chatter was, “Oh, so that’s how he did it!” Though they had no clue to the **precise** method he used, when they discovered **everyone** who’d had their mind read the previous night was secretly approached before the show, it ruined the image and reputation of that performer. And, word travels fast.

Since I don’t use any sort of **hidden** pre-show work, I never worry about my spectators looking for explanations the next day. During my show, I don’t waste time asking the participants if they were set up in any way. When they find they weren’t, my prestige goes up!

I'm not writing this to brag, but to give you advice from experience: I perform mentalism for a living. I approach what I do with as much thought and care as any other professional should in his own business. I refuse to leave "loose ends hanging" which could affect my income for the next year.

You'll note to this point I've been discussing **hidden** pre-show work. I do not think **all** pre-show work is unacceptable. Take, for instance, a newspaper headline prediction. You must set that up beforehand, sending out the sealed envelope, contacting the person with instructions about what to do with the prediction, and whatever else is involved. There's no need to hide the advance details from the audience — they **have** to know about them for it to be **effective**.

Spiritualists at the turn-of-the-century invited patrons to bring elaborately sealed packages into their offices, so they could prove the existence of the "other world" by having the "spirits" tell them what was inside. Much the same today, Uri Geller has sketches sealed in envelopes, then divines the contents.

Dunninger in his radio and television shows did his famous "brain-busters." For example, he might have had a guest author seal a line from a new book he was writing inside an envelope. Then, Dunninger would divulge that information on-air. The audience not only knew the test was set up beforehand, but that fact was used to impress the listeners about how impossible the proceedings were.

With these last examples in mind, I'll disclose how I handle pre-show work to strengthen another routine I'm performing.

### **TEST CONDITIONS DESIGN DUPLICATION**

In *THE BLINDFOLD BOOK*, Jeff reproduced several letters he has from Faucett Ross to Paul Fox, and vice-versa. In a letter written during 1938, Ross makes this cogent remark, emphasized in the original: "**The tests you present should fool the audience even if they know you had the use of your normal vision.** In other words, you could do the act without a blindfold and they'd still wonder how you did it."

In developing the *Supernatural Sight* routine, I started with the proposition that I wanted to do a routine where I divulged

personal objects and chosen playing cards while thoroughly blindfolded. While this is powerful material, the premise throughout is **not** I can somehow "**see** supernaturally." Quite the contrary, the blindfold is only an **incidental** prop used to **block** my sight; I **read** the spectators' minds.

Now, suppose during the routine I duplicated a design the president of the company had drawn and sealed in a package **before** the show? Such a test would convince the audience I am not somehow "peeking" through the blindfold: Any sort of secret sight wouldn't help see into the contents of the secure envelope. And, the fact there's no way I could use sight to divine the contents of the envelope cancels any hint of the methods I use for the earlier tests.

As I mentioned when I began my discussion of pre-show work, there is a wide variety of impression devices sold by magic dealers. Some have absolutely ingenious workings. Most, too, have a price matching the high ingenuity of the method. Now, this stuff just fascinates the typical magic buyer. They go into a shop, the dealer fools them with a design or word duplication, and they pull out their wallets for something they **cannot** use for any half-smart layman. Let me ask you this: How many of these clever props actually look normal? How many of them can you **leave** with the spectator whose impression you're stealing?

Sure, other magicians will ooh and aah at the local club meeting over how clever the prop is. But, magicians seem to forget that as magicians, they're well-aware they're being fooled by clever mechanics. What they mentally repress is the spectators **will know it too**. For, unless **all** suspicion of an impression is erased in your audience's minds, they have a clue. And, guess what? They are **right**!

When I do *Test Conditions Design Duplication*, here's what the spectator remembers I do: I hand the spectator a pad of paper. Then, I **turn my back**. I ask him to visualize a simple shape or design and draw it on the pad while my back is turned. I then ask him to fold the paper so **nothing** is visible, then tell me when he is done. Once he's hidden his design, I hand him a sheet of aluminum foil and an envelope. I walk away **and turn my back** again.



I **never touch** his paper — he wraps the foil around the paper himself and **retains it**. He puts the foil-wrapped paper into the envelope, seals it, and retains it while I'm still standing with my back turned. He puts the envelope in one of his pockets. No one else touches it or goes near it. He also **keeps the pad**, and can examine it forever **without finding a thing**.

When I do *Test Conditions Design Duplication* in my show, the spectator will corroborate the stringent conditions under which he drew his design. Yet, I'm able to copy the design **exactly**.

When I use **open** pre-show work, I use my *IM Pad*. The *IM Pad* is simply a three-by-five-inch, innocent-looking, pad of paper with a cover on it. Inside the cover is a simple and sure impression device. It isn't fancy; it doesn't use electronics or magnets. The *IM Pad* is a dealer item still on the market, so I can't explain the exact working, but it costs under ten bucks, not hundreds of dollars.

The effect supplied with the *IM Pad* was one of the earliest mental routines I ever invented. That was more than two decades ago — long before I'd made the earliest prototype of my *Apex Stainless Steel Blindfold* from an aluminum pie pan in the 1980s! Over the years I've considerably refined my original routine with the *IM Pad* — I'll be giving you **everything** as I now do it here.

One quite significant point of the *IM Pad* outfit seems overlooked: Though the pad itself looks innocent, the outfit includes a **duplicate ungimmicked pad matching the impression pad**. It's not for "handing out for examination," or overkill. It plays an **essential** part in creating the effect of utter impossibility.

You'll see how I use it as you follow along. You could use any sort of impression device, but how I handle my pad is so subtle, and has such an aura of fairness, I'll detail it the way I do it.

I have both pads in my inner coat pocket. I also have a manila envelope (the same size envelope I use to hold the prediction in *Clip Line Deluxe*), with an eight-by-eight-inch piece of aluminum foil, folded twice, within. I carry this in my side coat pocket.

When meeting with my client on the afternoon of the show, or just before the cocktail hour, I propose a very special "brain-

buster" test similar to what Dunninger used to do on television. I get the client off to the side alone with me. I make **sure** there are no tables or other surfaces near where he could rest a piece of writing paper. Then, I take out the gimmicked pad, open it, and **tear off the top sheet**. I place this on the cover of the pad for support.

I instruct him not to move until I have turned my back, "So there is no way I can see anything." Actually, this prevents him from placing the paper on any other surface but the pad. Now I ask him to draw a design on the paper, saying, "Visualize some simple shape or design in your mind. See it clearly. Then draw it as large as you can on the piece of paper." I ask him to fold the paper so nothing is visible, then tell me when he is done. While he is following what I've told him to do, I remove the envelope and take out the aluminum foil. I have the foil unfolded before I turn around.

When I turn to face him, the helper is surprised to see me holding the shiny piece of foil and envelope. I hand him the foil, instructing him to wrap his paper inside the foil. As I give him the foil, I extend my empty hand for the pad, **then take it**. I don't even seem to be aware of the pad, or my reaching hand, and I don't look at them. It's an entirely natural action: He's holding the folded paper, and you're passing him the foil. The subtext is you're relieving him of an unimportant object he's holding, so he can take another important object. As you'll see, he gets the pad back and won't even remember it was out of his hands for a moment, he's so preoccupied with following your instructions.

I drop the hand that's holding the pad, taking it out of his consciousness, as I pass him the envelope. I direct him to put the foil-wrapped paper into the envelope, then seal it. Saying I don't want to see any of what he does, I walk away while he follows my instructions, and turn my back. While facing away from him, I casually **switch** the gaffed pad for the ungimmicked one!

Once he's finished sealing the foil-wrapped packet in the envelope, I turn around. I ask him to put the envelope in one of his pockets, and caution him not to let **anyone else** touch it.

Then, I look down at the pad in my hand, seem to notice it, then ask him to place the pad in another pocket. That is the set up. You'll see why I take the trouble to switch the pad as I explain the presentation for my routine.

Of course, I retrieve the impression from the gimmicked pad at my leisure before the show, and memorize the design!

If you'll do this as part of a routine other than *Supernatural Sight*, or as a solo effect, when the point comes in the show where you'll use this, ask the assistant up. Otherwise, have the assistant on stage participating in the first two phases of the *Supernatural Sight*. When I do the complete routine, by the third phase the assistant is alone on stage with me.

I now explain to the audience we have arranged a special test. I ask the assisting spectator to confirm all the following: He drew a picture on a piece of paper that was ripped out of a pad, so there could be **no mark on the next sheet down**; he **kept** the pad and **still has it in his pocket**; I was standing far away with my **back turned**, so there is no way I could have seen the drawing; he immediately folded the paper and **sealed** it in some metal foil; he then **sealed** that foil package inside a heavy envelope; he placed that envelope straightaway into his pocket and **no one has touched it since**. I reiterate: "At no time did I ever touch the paper, the foil package, or the sealed envelope. Is that correct?" I have him verify this too.

Look at how the conditions are perceived by both the audience **and** the assisting spectator! To any of them, there is **no way** trickery could have entered into this: I was unable to see the drawing and I haven't touched anything since the drawing was done. These are truly "test conditions." Now, no evidence remains, not even in the assisting spectator's memory. What he could describe is **exactly** what you did — all the more impressive.

While the above dialogue is ongoing, if I'm performing the full *Supernatural Sight* routine, I am still blindfolded. Now, I ask the assisting spectator to give me the blackboard and chalk. I ask the spectator to concentrate on his design. I duplicate the drawing, and put the slate aside face down.

Only now do I remove the blindfold and Band-Aids®, squinting a bit as if I've had my eyes closed throughout the routine,

and the bright light is affecting them. I ask the assistant to tear open the envelope, then show the foil packet to the audience. Next, I ask him to unfold the foil. When he gets to the paper, I ask him to unfold it. Finally, I ask him to hold it up, explaining what the drawing is to those who can't see it.

For the capper, I turn over the blackboard, showing an identical drawing to him, and the audience. You're finished and you're clean. What could be fairer than this?

### ***PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER***

If you've stayed with me so far, all that remains is to give you the structure of the entire routine. The setup of the stage is as I've already described under "Effect." You now know how I work the *Psychometry* effect, card reading, and design duplication. Begin with the patter introducing the jumbo cards, then invite two spectators up to assist you. Of course, one of the pair of spectators is the person with whom you did the pre-show work.

You now tell what will happen with the spectators, by using the lines outlined in *Paroptic Psychometry I*. Have the blindfold examined, and your eyes taped, if the method you use allows it. Don the blindfold, and continue with either version of *Paroptic Psychometry*, but keep **both** helpers on stage rather than sending them back to their seats.

Have the helper who isn't retaining the sealed design assist with the divination of the six jumbo cards. During the routine, have that spectator return to his seat, leaving you on stage with the final spectator for the design duplication. Present *Test Conditions Design Duplication* exactly as described, with the result you're on stage with the blindfold off, for the dramatic revelation of the symbol.

All three phases presented together are a **powerful** demonstration of your psychic abilities!

